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ABSTRACT

The social history of the Free Kindergarten Union of the State of Victoria, Australia, from inception in 1908 to the year 1980 is recorded in this book. Growth of the union is described within the context of the World Wars, the Depression, and urbanization and industrialization. The story begins with volunteerism and philanthropy, and with four kindergartens attempting to meet the needs of impoverished children. By mid-century the union had become an influence on government and throughout society. Some of its ventures (the training of teachers, medical and dental inspection of preschool children, and funding of kindergartens and their staff) have become government functions. Peaking at 89 member kindergartens in 1975 and facing increasingly high costs, overdrafts, and lack of management experience in local parent committees, the union persisted in pioneering efforts by also venturing into the field of preschool education for migrant children. Within this account other situations unfold, such as the conflict between popular and inexpensive full-day childminding and the more expensive educationally oriented preschools. More than a general survey, this work gives numerous details, providing, for example, particulars indicating the impact on staff of John Bowlby's research and showing the positive influence of the "Kindergarten of the Air" radio program on parents' attitudes toward kindergarten. (RH)

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THE
FREE KINDERGARTEN UNION OF VICTORIA
1908–80

ED221304

Lyndsay Gardiner

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Abbreviations

AAPSCD	Australian Association for Pre-School Child Development
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
APA	Australian Pre-school Association
COS	Charity Organisation Society
FKU	Free Kindergarten Union
IECD	Institute of Early Childhood Development
KTC	Kindergarten Training College
MKTC	Melbourne Kindergarten Teachers College
MRC	Multi-cultural Resource Centre
NEF	New Education Fellowship

Introduction

Our story begins in a society without kindergartens. Melbourne's children, in the first decades of her history, 'just growed'. Some private individuals opened small educational establishments; presently the churches and the state took a hand until, by 1880, all children aged six years and over were legally required to attend some 'place of learning'. But there was little if any thought for the under-sixes. To be sure, their way into the world was eased with the opening in 1856 of the Lying-In Hospital, while assorted Foundling Homes and Orphanages, usually under the auspices of a religious denomination, cared for those children whose parents either could or would not do so themselves. This was all.

Rather, perhaps, one should say, it was 'all' for the vast majority of Victorian children. Some few, the off-spring of better-off parents in middle-class suburbs had, towards the close of last century, the benefit of the New Education movement spreading from Europe to England, and so to other western-type societies.[1] For the pre-school child, this New Education began with the work of Friedrich Froebel (1782–1852), a German teacher of the first half of the nineteenth century, who believed intensely, with almost mystical fervour, in the importance of the early training of the child—not in a system of rote learning nor in strict discipline, but in a gradual process of growth. The child, to Froebel, was like a flower; the task of the educator was to provide the appropriate climate, soil, conditions in which the flower would flourish. Suitable places for play and rest, suitable equipment—gifts, he called them—gentle direction: these were the essentials if children were to grow like flowers in a garden. Thus the institutions which were developed by followers of Froebel were known as 'Kindergartens'.

Britain's first kindergarten was opened in Tavistock Place in London in 1864, and Charles Dickens in *Household Words*[2] commended it and Froebelian philosophy to his readers. The language seems saccharine and sentimental to our ears, attuned to the cooler scientific terminology of psychologists, but the message is the same. 'There would be fewer sullen, quarrelsome, dull-witted men and women, if there were fewer children starved or fed improperly in heart and brain', he wrote; and again, 'The first sproutings of the human mind need thoughtful culture; there is no period of life, indeed, in which culture is so essential. And yet, in nine out of ten cases, it is precisely while the little blades of thought and buds of love are frail and tender, that no heed is taken to maintain the soil about them wholesome, and the air about them free from blight'. More particularly, he explained that it was Froebel's purpose 'to show the direction in which it was most useful to proceed, how best to assist the growth of the mind by following the indications nature furnishes'; and proceeded to describe how use of Froebel's gifts leaves 'the child prompt for subsequent instruction, already comprehending the elements of a good deal of knowledge'.

Nearly sixty years later and over twelve thousand miles away, Miss Mary Lush, one of the earliest Melbourne kindergarteners, explained how she saw the Froebelian ideal applied to industrial Melbourne. Cities, she said, present:

> a field of golden opportunity to the Kindergartens. The city environment was disastrous to physical welfare, unhealthy children growing into nervous, undeveloped men and women. The excitement of life on the city streets produced a type of mind unable to reflect, to connect cause and effect; shallow in the extreme yet alert and shrewd. In many cases the city child became an outlaw, an insignificant unit alone but unable to resist the influence of a strong leader and only too ready to follow the 'push' spirit. In order to combat the evils of city surroundings, the Kindergartener was urged to make her Kindergarten a lovely home where the child with nerves unstrung could find possible happiness and yet be bathed in an atmosphere of quietness and peace; to study Froebel's thought of Unity and through Nature Nurture to lead the child to see cause and effect; to develop in each little one the sense of his own power over material and ultimately his selfhood and his social relationships.[3]

One of Froebel's followers in Melbourne was Miss Annie Westmoreland who, as early as 1899, at the request of the University Extension Board, started a series of Saturday morning lectures on Kindergarten Method, at the University High School, for sub-primary teachers. At about the same time she opened her own kindergarten in Kew, associated with an independent girls school, Ruyton.[4] This was not merely a kindergarten, but also a training school for intending kindergarten teachers. Miss Westmoreland, however, was not the originator in Melbourne of kindergartens or of kindergarten teacher training. Earlier still, in 1887, the Victorian Education Department had imported an English kindergartener to train sub-primary (age group undefined) teachers at the Department's Model School.[5] This innovation was soon cut short by the depression of the 1890s, but the concept of kindergarten work had found some acceptance among Melbourne's educated middle class, and it was among their children that the first Melbourne kindergartens developed. A Kindergarten Society was formed—Miss Westmoreland being its first president—in 1902; its aim was to train kindergarteners. This was done at Miss Westmoreland's Ruyton Kindergarten Training School (RKTS) where the first four candidates qualified in 1903; Miss Westmoreland continued her work till 1913 when she retired because of ill health.

By that time, however, the state education system had come under the control of two remarkable and forceful men, both devotees of the New Education. One was Frank Tate, from 1902 to 1928 Director of Education, and the other was Dr John Smyth, Principal from 1902 to 1927 of the Melbourne (later the State) Teachers College. Smyth in particular was a keen advocate of Froebelian ideas and of the early training of little children in kindergartens. In his *Guide to a Modern Infant Room* he wrote, 'Too long the cry has been that anyone can teach infants. Rather should we say that the most highly trained teachers are needed for them'.[6] Putting this belief into action, Smyth took two positive steps. Firstly, in 1907, he put one of the Department's trained sub-primary teachers, Miss Emeline Pye, in charge of Central Brunswick State School, which became a practising school for sub-primary student-teachers. Secondly, a year later he appointed Miss Pye as Mistress of Method at the Teachers College to lecture to sub-primary student-teachers. Training for an Infant Teachers Certificate, which enabled a student to be registered as a sub-primary teacher by the state Registration Board, took two years; students who successfully completed the RKTS could also be registered. At the time, the course for primary teachers was only one year.

So far was so good, and marked a definite advance in both the recognition of the importance of the education of a small child and in the training of his teachers. The great lack was in practical training. Central Brunswick was a school, not a kindergarten; it could provide practice with children over five; but what about the three- and four-year-olds? There was training available with a few little children at the RKTS—but at the cost of two guineas a term for a two-year course. What was needed was a group of kindergartens which could be used as practical training centres. This was clearly seen by Smyth, and he and Miss Pye were early advocates of a union of existing free kindergartens which could, they saw, provide such training centres. Smyth was present at the earliest meeting of 'delegates' to discuss the formation of a kindergarten union.[7] In 1909 both he and Miss Pye were members of the 'supervision committee'[8], the body which developed into the later education committee of the Union. Smyth remained on the Union executive till 1914, and Miss Pye on the education committee till 1915.

* * *

Froebelian influence on educationalists is insufficient by itself to account for the development of free kindergartens in Melbourne—indeed there is no evidence to suggest that Froebel cared whether kindergartens were free or otherwise. The earliest free kindergartens here predated Smyth at the Teachers College and Miss Pye as Mistress of Method (sub-primary). The four free kindergartens which preceded the Union were primarily the result of a wave of social concern which, never absent among Christians, takes various forms at various times. The concern which, in the previous century, had sent Elizabeth Fry to the prisons, Florence Nightingale to the Crimea and the hospitals, Caroline Chisholm to the aid of immigrants, and Josephine Butler to the barred world of the prostitute, now drew women to the cause of neglected, hungry, ignorant children. There were many such children in Melbourne during and following the great depression, and the clergy and lay workers of the various denominations were not slow to draw the attention of their comfortable, middle-class congregations to the need which existed. In Carlton, Burnley, Collingwood, and North Melbourne, where the narrow streets, crowded lanes, and insanitary houses were 'white for harvest', free kindergartens were founded between 1901 and 1907. In each case the director seems to have had some formal kindergarten, or at least sub-primary, training; Mrs Marion Champlin, Director at the Collingwood Mission Free Kindergarten, for example, had been on Miss Westmoreland's staff at Ruyton and had kindergarten qualifications from the United States.[9] Each director was supported by untrained and unpaid assistants, fore-runners of the later, organized voluntary helpers.

Kindergarten work was seen as an ideal occupation for young married women in the years before World War I. This was the period when educated women, now able to matriculate and to take university degrees in all faculties, were entering the professions, while their less intellectual sisters were manning the first telephone exchanges and officiating at the first typewriters. Socially, however, particularly among the more conservative type of paterfamilias, this kind of occupation was not entirely acceptable. Kindergarten work was different. It was, in essence, women's work—a point stressed by Dickens; it had to do with children and caring; it was thus not only an excellent preparation for the 'ultimate calling' of marriage, but also a thoroughly Christian occupation. Further, it was either unpaid, and so did not diminish the importance of 'father' as provider for his 'women folk', or it was paid so little that he could shrug aside the tiny pittance as mere 'pin money'. Fathers and brothers were not alone in commending the kindergarten field to daughters and sisters; professional women, too, advocated it. Thus, the convener of the union's education committee, Isabel Henderson, stressed the value of kindergarten training for 'the young woman who has never learnt self-reliance in thought, and especially to the girl who has nothing to take up her time save the ordinary social duties, for this training develops her womanliness'.[10] Marion Champlin also emphasized the beneficial effects of kindergarten work for the teacher as well as for the taught.[11]

There can be no doubt of the Christian missionary motive behind the founding of the first free kindergartens. At the opening of the Collingwood Free Kindergarten for Poor Children, 'a gracious answer to many prayers', one of the speakers referred to the equipment, furnishings, even the flowers, all telling 'their tale of love for the child so fresh from the hand of God'.[12] A year later we read that 'the ever-presence of God has been evidenced and our every need has been supplied'.[13] Even earlier, Carlton's founder and director, Miss Maud Wilson, had written in the annual report, 'Above and beyond all, we thank our Lord and Master who has raised so many friends, and who thus provides for this labour of love amongst His little ones'[14]; while in 1907 she wrote:

> God has been wonderfully good to us this year . . . In answer to prayer, every real need has been provided . . . For seven years our kindergarten has stood, relying on faith in God for its support; never once has He failed us. He never will. He has said, 'They shall not be ashamed that wait for me'.[15]

* * *

It will be seen, then, that two separate streams converged to form the river of the Free Kindergarten Union in 1908—the educational stream, springing from Froebel and the New Education movement, and the stream of Christian philanthropy. We must, however, avoid the easy course of separating the advocates of the Union, its executive and early directors, into rigid categories. The educationalists certainly had philanthropic issues well in mind. John Smyth freely acknowledged the important place which philanthropy 'must always hold' in the Union's activities[16] while M.P. Hansen, teacher and inspector at various times in both state and independent schools and finally Victoria's Director of Education in succession to Frank Tate, actually considered 'the social and philanthropic work carried out by the kindergartens more important than the educational side'.[17]

The philanthropic wing of the Union, particularly members of local committees and many voluntary helpers in kindergartens, was not so certain about the value of education as the educational wing was about the necessity of philanthropy. The educationalists knew that 'one cannot teach a hungry child'; the philanthropists, however, were apt to overlook the fact that one of the two bases of the Union was the educational base. Hansen recognized this when he wrote to Frank Tate that it is 'not surprising that an insistence on the adequate technical training of teachers might be regarded by philanthropists as tending to divert public opinion from the paramount importance of child rescue *for which purpose* the kindergarten movement has been started. I see clearly that here, as in other countries, difficulty will be experienced in preserving a wise balance between the educational and philanthropic ideals of Kindergarten work'[18] (author's italics). From 1910, when the Union received its first annual government grant via the education department, the philanthropists were concerned about the dangers of state aid, probable and improbable, fearing that the injection of government funds might lead not only to a reduction in charitable donations, but also to a fall in the number of volunteers on whom the movement depended—both as local committees and as voluntary helpers.[19]

Most members of the Union executive and its directors were, however, concerned with both philanthropy and education. Indeed, many of the most ardent philanthropists had trained as kindergarteners, because this was their way of showing philanthropy; for them, as for countless other devotees of the New Education, education for the people, all people, old and young, was *the* hope of the future, of a better society, of a wiser, kinder world. Theirs was the vision expressed in the verse:

> These things shall be! A loftier race
> Than e'er the world hath known shall rise,
> With flame of freedom in their souls,
> And light of knowledge in their eyes.[20]

These women, and the men who supported them, were concerned with the total education of the young child, the development of his mind, the uplifting of his morals and the cleansing and feeding of his body. Marion Champlin, interviewed by a reporter from *The New Idea*, spoke of the mental, physical, and spiritual value of the kindergarten for the child:

> Over and over again, I have seen children come to us, dazed mentally and morally—with drawn faces and dull, pathetic eyes. A fortnight in the Kindergarten with its music, its harmony, its atmosphere of love, and the strained features relax, the soul awakens and looks through cleared eyes. In a month the child is a happy, laughing youngster; development has begun.[21]

Early Union members like Mrs Champlin — and there were many of them, women like Isabel Henderson, Nora Semmens, Dorothy Bethune, Mary Lush, Annie Westmoreland, and Maud Wilson — would no more have denied their philanthropic role than they would have rejected the New Education or the precepts of Froebel.

Chapter 1

Growing Pains—The Union to 1912

The earliest official record of the Free Kindergarten Union is the minutes of a meeting on 9 October 1908 of a group of interested people who called themselves 'delegates'.[1] Those present included Dr Smyth, Miss Wilson, and Miss Westmoreland, at least three young kindergarteners who had helped her at the RKTS—Mrs Marion Champlin and the Misses Hedderwick—Rev. T.S.B. Woodfull, a Methodist minister, Rev. Ebenezer Steggall, a Congregational minister and secretary of the City Mission, Sister Faith (Miss Evangeline Ireland) later well known as one of the founders of Yooralla, and Mrs Alfred Deakin, wife of the Prime Minister, whom the meeting elected provisional president of the union they proposed to form. Six of these delegates were empowered to draw up a constitution, which was adopted at a second delegates meeting on 21 October. As far as this writer can discover, no copy of this original constitution survives.

The delegates, after this, became known as the council of the FKU. One of the council's first tasks was to approach various people of influence or ability, or both, and invite them to accept positions as vice-presidents of the Union or members of the council. In this way, two M.P.s, George Swinburne and F.T. Derham, and two very active, able women, Mrs Robert Harper and Mrs T.A. a'Beckett, came to be associated with the movement.*

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*Mrs Harper, née Jane Cairns, 1847/8–1924, was the youngest of five daughters of a prominent Presbyterian minister, Adam Cairns, and wife of an early Victorian parliamentarian and wealthy merchant whose name appeared on such products as Harper's Oats, Starch and Spices. A keen philanthropist, associated with the Time and Talents Club and the YWCA, she lived at Myoora in Toorak and was a member of the Toorak Presbyterian Church and on the original committee of the Lady Northcote Free Kindergarten at Montague.

The Union was also able to secure vice-regal patronage which it has enjoyed ever since. Several governors' ladies lent not only their names but also their active and financial support to the movement.

As the Union lacked an executive, a group of six known as 'the sub-committee', chosen by the council, was asked to conduct routine affairs between meetings. These six were Mrs Deakin, president, Mrs Watson-Lister, secretary, Mrs Victor Wischer, honorary secretary of the Burnley Free Kindergarten, treasurer, Mrs Champlin, assistant secretary, Dr Smyth, and Mr Woodfull. This sub-committee, fore-runner of the executive, first met on 26 March 1909. A formal executive, elected at the first annual meeting of the Union, did not replace this sub-committee till a year later on 22 March 1910, when Mrs Deakin was retained as president. The first formal executive meeting was on 22 May 1910. The first executive had a new secretary, Mrs Wischer, and a new treasurer, Dr Edith Barrett who represented the National Council of Women on the Union council; it still included Dr Smyth, but not Mrs Champlin; other members were Mrs M.R. McMillan, honorary secretary of the Fitzroy Crèche Kindergarten committee, and Miss Isabel Henderson, at that time headmistress of Faireleight which in 1911 became Clyde Girls School and who was later prominent on the Association of Secondary Teachers of Victoria, member of the Teachers Registration Board and of the University of Melbourne Schools Board, and first president of the Victorian Headmistresses Association.

On 14 May 1909, a full year before the first executive meeting, the council authorized the sub-committee to 'call in outside experts' to consult with it about a training scheme for kindergarteners. The experts chosen, who were to act with the sub-committee, were a very formidable band—Miss Grace McMillan, a trained sub-primary teacher, Miss Elsie Morres, headmistress of The Hermitage CEGGS in Geelong, Miss Pye, Miss Wilson, Miss Westmoreland, Mr M. Hansen, and Mr L.J. Wrigley, inspector of schools and later Professor of Education in the University of Melbourne. This body was called the 'supervision committee' and was the predecessor of the education committee of the Union. Its earliest surviving minutes date from 23 May 1911, but it was undoubtedly active before this; its convener was Isabel Henderson who contributed a brief report to the Union's second annual report 1910–11.

These constitutional matters have been dealt with in what may seem pedantic detail, but this has been done deliberately as the persevering reader will shortly see. Two points may be made now: firstly that the education committee predated the executive; and secondly that, though Marion Champlin, holder of a kindergarten qualification from the USA, formerly of the RKTS staff, first director of the Collingwood Mission Kindergarten, and since June 1909 supervisor of all Union kindergartens, was on the original sub-committee, she was not on the formal executive elected in March 1910. As a member of the sub-committee of six she had been on the supervision, later education, committee; when she no longer held executive office, she was no longer on the education committee. These facts made possible the divisive controversy in the infant Union in 1911.

Discussion of the tempestuous year, 1911, must wait until the gradual growth of the Union from 1909 has been traced. There were four kindergartens founded before the Union was established; they were its first affiliates. The earliest, in Bouverie Street, Carlton, just south of the University of Melbourne's main gates, was founded by Miss Maud Wilson and a group of friends connected with the Baptist Church in 1901.[2] In 1906, in the Presbyterian Church hall in Burnley, with the support of many friends from Kew, including Annie Westmoreland, a second free kindergarten was opened, with Miss Nora Semmens as director.[3] The Methodist Church entered the scene in 1907 with the opening of the Collingwood Mission Kindergarten where Mrs Champlin was shortly succeeded as director by Sister Vere, who as Irene McMeekin will appear again.[4] The origins of the fourth pre-Union kindergarten are not so certain.[5] It was undoubtedly in existence when the Union was established; its name appears on the list of eight affiliated kindergartens in the 1910 annual report, but it is not one of the four which are noticed in that report as *new* affiliations. The usually accepted date for its foundation is 1906, that given in the survey of the Union's history in the 1934 annual report. This tallies with Marion Champlin's list of free kindergartens given to *The New Idea* reporter in May 1909. She places its origin after Burnley but before Collingwood Mission and says it was 'set going' by the Church of Christ. However, a list of Melbourne's charities, published in 1912, gives the foundation date as 1911; this tallies with the first report of the North Melbourne Kindergarten itself which explicitly states: 'In May, 1911 . . . this kindergarten was opened'. The North Melbourne Kindergarten listed in the Union's 1910 report was in the Church of Christ chapel; the kindergarten opened in 1911 was 'in a school-room lent by the Methodist Church'. It seems probable, then, that the original Church of Christ kindergarten in Chetwynd Street was short-lived—1906, perhaps, to 1909 or 1910—and that in 1911, in connection with the North Melbourne crèche in Howard Street, another kindergarten was started. There is no North Melbourne kindergarten listed in the Union's 1911 annual report.

In the first year of the Union's existence, four more kindergartens were founded and were at once affiliated. The first of these was at Montague[6], then one of Melbourne's poorest districts. It was started by a committee from the Toorak Presbyterian Church which included Mrs Robert Harper, and for three years led a peripatetic existence, first in the Presbyterian Mission hall, then in the Methodist Mission hall and finally in premises of its own in Buckhurst

Street. Here Miss Dorothy Bethune, one of the most able and devoted of early kindergarteners was director for 20 years. Average attendance varied from 100 to 120 children.

The second in this batch of early kindergartens was the Fitzroy Crèche-Kindergarten[7] whose chequered fortunes we will glimpse in the next chapter, and the third was that founded by the Women's Christian Temperance Union in Cremorne Street, Richmond.[8] This kindergarten, later called the Marie Kirk Kindergarten after its first secretary, opened with 20 children in August 1909 and quickly reached its full capacity of 80.

At the very end of 1909, Melbourne's Lady Mayoress organized a local committee to establish a kindergarten in association with the City Crèche on the corner of Lonsdale and Exhibition Streets, conducted by the interdenominational City Mission. This kindergarten opened in 1910[9] and was for years a perpetual anxiety to the Union; the committee was not strong, nor was the transitory population of the inner city area stable enough to build even a small nucleus of interested parents. Italian families from north and west Melbourne, Chinese families from Little Bourke Street, working mothers on their way to factories in Collingwood and Fitzroy—from these diverse groups the children were drawn, leading the annual report to state graphically, if ungrammatically, in 1916 that at the City Kindergarten 'half the children are of various nationalities'.[10]

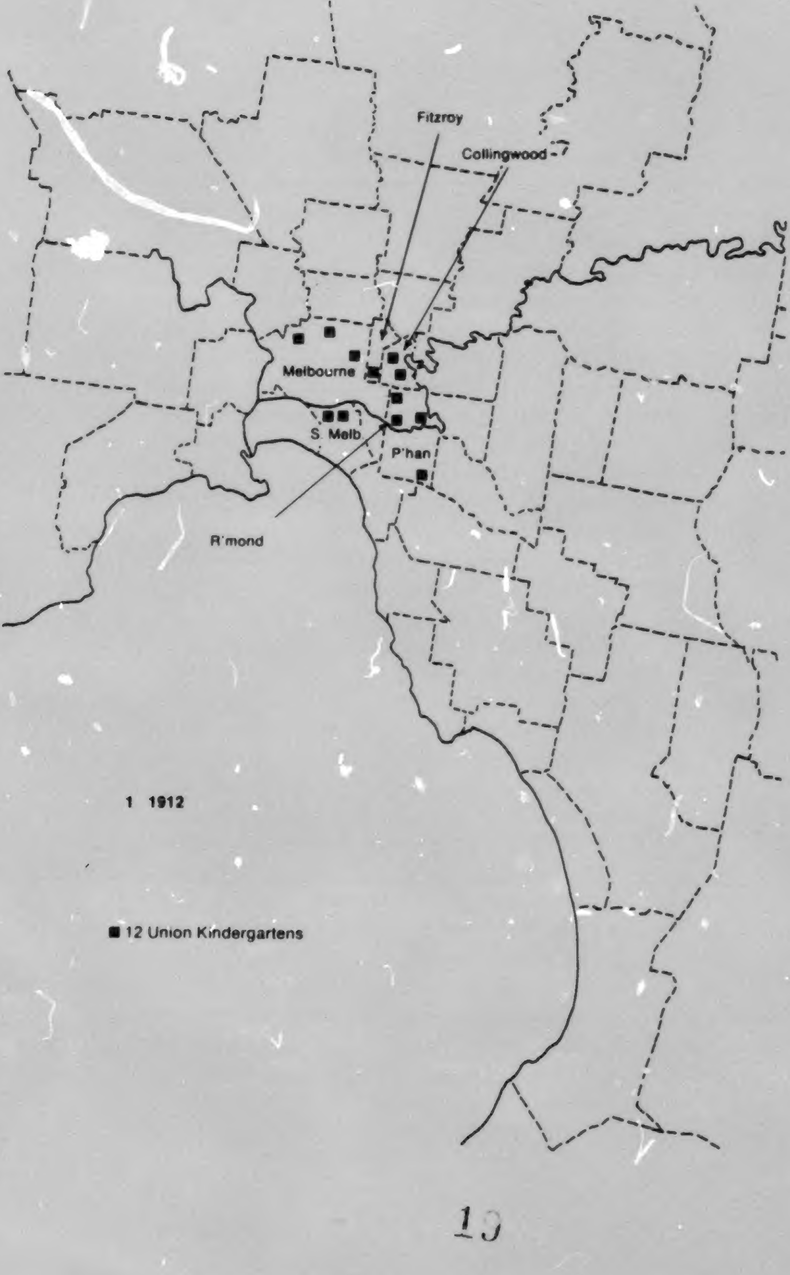
In the following 12 months, four more kindergartens were established and affiliated. That serving the working-class areas of Prahran was known as the Hornbrook Kindergarten, because its premises in Eastbourne Street were made available to the local committee by the trustees of the Hornbrook Ragged Schools Association.[11] The trust controlled funds provided by Mr Hornbrook in 1857 to open schools 'for children too poor to attend state schools'; it was stipulated that some religious instruction 'calculated not to wound the susceptibilities of parents of children must be imparted'. This clause did not distress the Union; as Miss Wilson remarked comfortably, 'It was the rule of all Free Kindergartens to open the day's work with a hymn and a prayer for children, and direct Scripture could easily be taught without reference to creed or belief'. The Union was not always to find so ingenuous an answer to religious questions.

Three months later, in July 1910, the Methodist Mission in South Melbourne made its building available for a free kindergarten there[12]; and in the following year a kindergarten was started in connection with the Collingwood crèche.[13] The Collingwood kindergarten was known as the Keele Street Kindergarten to distinguish it from the other Collingwood (Mission) Kindergarten in Gipps Street, with its little offshoot for younger children in Rokeby Street. Another crèche-kindergarten was opened at Richmond in 1911[14], with a committee consisting solely of crèche officers. This kindergarten lasted only four years as a crèche-kindergarten because pressure of numbers forced the crèche committee to take over the kindergarten room for child-minding. A new kindergarten—the Dame Nellie Melba—replaced it.

Thus in two years the number of affiliated kindergartens was twelve; average attendance was approximately 60, which meant that already the Union was catering for something over 700 children and, it was hoped, reaching beyond them to their families. Affiliated kindergartens paid the Union an annual fee of 10/- for membership; each was entitled to send two representatives to the Union council.[15]

These kindergartens were run by voluntary bodies, known misleadingly as 'local committees'. They were, in fact, anything but local in the customary geographical sense of that word. The committees at that time were drawn from a 'better' locality than that of the kindergarten they supported; that is, they were better-off economically, well-to-do in fact; they were higher up the social ladder; they were uniformly professing Christians with a keen sense of social obligation, and most of them were people of some education. They were, in short, men and women who had money and time to spend in helping to alleviate the lot of the poor.

In time, the local committee usually contrived to own the property where the kindergarten was held; at the beginning it was they who rented or, more often, had free use of it. The building was almost invariably a church hall, often with tiers where the children of the Sunday School could sit in serried ranks to be instructed; the problems this must have produced for the early directors may be imagined. The local committee was responsible for furnishing and equipping the premises. The director, paid the princely sum of £70 per annum, had sole charge of the day-to-day running, with the care and teaching of the children. Appointed by the local committee, she was ultimately responsible to them. She was usually assisted by untrained and unpaid volunteers, known as voluntary helpers; as early as 1909 Mrs Champlin estimated that 'between 30 and 40 splendid young women' served in Union kindergartens as voluntary helpers.[16] Being a kindergarten voluntary helper was, in the years just before World War I and in the inter-war period, a fashionable form of social service for a female, particularly for the young female between school and marriage. Highly praised, in successive annual reports[17], for their efforts, and cherished by the trained, overworked, and underpaid directors of the early kindergartens, the voluntary helpers received their first bouquet from no less a person than Isabel Henderson as early as 1911 when, reporting to the Minister of Education from the Union's education committee, she wrote: 'The good effect these refined young women have upon the children . . . is very great,


Fitzroy
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■ 12 Union Kindergartens

and besides that, the effect of the work on the voluntary helper herself is most uplifting'.[18]

A local group eager to found a kindergarten—in the early days always in a depressed inner suburb—could from 1909 apply to the Union for affiliation. For instance, in the single month of October 1909 alone, three letters were received by the executive enquiring about affiliation.[19] The secretary was instructed to reply that 'the Union had not sufficient funds to start new kindergartens, but would gladly co-operate with anyone who would form a local committee to work the matter up in each neighbourhood'. Sometimes there was just a little, very little, financial help, though the Union never committed itself to this as a right of affiliation; always there was advice and encouragement to local committees on matters of equipment or methods of furnishing. When a new director was required, the Union's education committee would consider the particular needs of that particular kindergarten and recommend the person they thought most suitable; if a committee appointed a director themselves, she had to be approved by the Union.[20] Perhaps most importantly, because the Union considered that no trained director could, or should be asked to, cope adequately with more than 60 children, they undertook, if numbers necessitated a trained assistant director, to pay her salary.[21] (Crèche-kindergartens were treated differently. Their position was anomalous and not altogether happy as their control was shared between the Union and the Association of Crèches. The Union paid the salaries of directors in crèche-kindergartens.)

The salaries of directors and assistant directors were very low. They were set by the Union, presumably with the object of keeping some uniformity among the various kindergartens to avoid more wealthy committees enticing staff from the less wealthy; possibly also, the Union, responsible for assistants' salaries, wished to keep directors' salaries within such a range that the pittance which was all they could afford for assistants would not appear too incongruous. Slight variations in directors' salaries were permitted according to the number of children attending, but this never seems to have varied beyond £10 per annum. In 1911, the average director's salary was £70 per annum and that of an assistant £30. The education committee urged that assistants should receive £40 in the first year after qualifying, rising by annual increments of £5 to £50. 'Until salaries are higher', they declared, 'there would always be a dearth of applicants.'[22] A quarter of a century later they were saying the same thing. Kindergarteners for many years remained among the lowest paid of professional people. Marion Champlin seems to have been unduly optimistic about salary prospects[23]; she thought that in a 'widening' field they were good. She visualized a minimum salary of £80 per annum, rising to as much as £150 'for a trained teacher in charge of 40 children and upwards'. Mrs Champlin believed that the idea of pre-school education would rapidly be accepted in the community, that state and independent schools would employ trained kindergarteners, and that some private families would want them as kindergarten governesses. Such women, she thought, had 'a right to demand' a reasonable salary. Mrs Champlin in this matter was nearly half a century in advance of her time.

Most, perhaps all, kindergarteners came from middle-class homes, where it was still normal for an unmarried female to be supported by a father or a brother. She therefore required (for survival) *no* salary and was usually content with her pittance—as indeed, for pride's sake, were her male protectors. Furthermore, while her motives were to a large extent philanthropic, she was pleased to work for little material return, as sisters in religious orders had been doing for centuries. But as a sense of professionalism developed, the desire, indeed the necessity, for higher salaries came to be felt. How could one attract good minds into a two (and later three) year training course, for which fees had to be paid, and then expect them to be regarded as Cinderellas beside women doctors and lawyers—even beside the poorly-paid female teachers? Again, as middle-class women became increasingly eager for economic independence from their men folk, and as the spread of secondary education enabled girls from less affluent backgrounds to train as kindergarteners, higher salaries became not only professionally but also economically necessary. Several times, as this story of the FKU unfolds, this problem and its development will recur.

The founders of the Union expected great things from the young women who were its directors and assistants. 'We must attract the right women to take up this work', declares an early annual report, 'women of education, from cultured homes, and with broad sympathies, and with the power of winning both the children and their mothers by their personality'.[24] M. Hansen wrote in 1912: 'Kindergarten training is invaluable both as a means of developing character and as a means of gaining sympathy with and knowledge of child life. This work trains, in the highest degree, self-reliance and true womanliness . . . Child study will undoubtedly come . . . to be recognised as an essential part in the education of adolescent girls'.[25]

Certainly, self-reliance and a knowledge of children must have been inescapable by-products of even a brief period in an early Melbourne kindergarten. 'Our children suffer greatly from living in over-crowded dwellings', wrote the supervisor of the Union in 1919, '. . . so long as the public house continues to be the chief food consumer in the state, so long will under-fed and ill-nourished children appear in our kindergartens'.[26] The early kindergartens were not for nice, clean, well-spoken children from tidy, well-fed homes; they were kindergartens opened deliberately in overcrowded, working-class suburbs to assist overworked mothers with low or uncertain incomes, and to try and keep pre-school children off the streets. Before the Union would agree to support a local committee wishing to open a kindergarten, they usually sent the supervisor and one or two executive members to walk about the district; if they saw numbers of little children, unwashed and ragged, playing in the lanes and gutters, then they felt that a kindergarten was warranted. One area, described as 'one of the worst parts of Melbourne for drunken women' had, in 1918, no kindergarten; the education committee urged the executive to ascertain 'whether the district is *poor enough* (author's italics) . . . for a kindergarten'.[27]

A kindergarten director was intended and trained not merely to serve and teach the pre-school child; she was intended to reach beyond him to his family, and indirectly, it was hoped, to the whole district. The aim was 'to enable mothers to help themselves'.[28] Kindergarten for the children was held only in the mornings; the afternoons were for home visiting when a director would see inside the homes of her charges and get to know a mother and her problems and her needs. In those days, before there was a state welfare department, a kindergarten was often the means whereby needy families—a desperate father grappling alone with young children, for instance, after the death or illness of or desertion by his wife—were introduced to the charitable body best suited to assist them. The Union itself was listed among Melbourne charities in the Charities Organisation Society booklet of 1912. In addition, much help was provided by directors and assistants themselves, and by local committees on their suggestion. One mother might be given a sewing machine, perhaps; another, tubercular, provided with fresh milk. Mothers were asked for lists of clothes they could not afford for their children—boots were a constant anxiety—and many necessities would be provided by local committees. In most kindergartens, clothes were not given but sold at jumble sales, as kindergarteners of that era were very concerned not to 'pauperize' the people, but to try to inculcate the well-known virtues of thrift and independence. For instance, one Carlton annual report contains this paragraph: 'The boot, blanket and flannelette funds are now in full swing. Much help is given through these channels and the ideals of self-help and self-respect kept before the mothers'.[29]

In 1917, the Union supervisor stated bluntly, 'It is a generally accepted fact that our working-class population needs lessons in thrift'.[30] One attempt to impart this lesson was by the establishment of a kindergarten bank for mothers, run by one of the committee members. Burnley noted in 1914 'Many of the deposits are very tiny but very regular and our total is no mean one'[31], while Carlton recorded proudly, 'The kindergarten bank flourishes . . . Several of the mothers have paid for the boots with the bank money saved . . . Always our aim is to enable mothers to help themselves'.[32]

In most kindergartens, mothers meetings were held monthly, where children's problems could be discussed and advice given on diet, clothing, and ailments; often a guild for older children now at school was held in the kindergarten in the afternoon. Always there was emphasis on cleanliness—not an easy thing to achieve in a district where perhaps six four-roomed terrace houses, each housing more than one family, shared one outside tap as their sole water supply. Not that the rules of hygiene were easy to observe at kindergarten either; one sorely-tried assistant, whose tasks included taking three-year-olds to the outside lavatory 50 yards away across a muddy, unpaved yard, remarked that her 'Coat of Arms should be a Jerry Rampant'. It was one thing for Prime Minister Deakin to expatiate at the annual meeting in 1911 on 'the reflex in slovenly homes made more beautiful by the children who had learned to appreciate beauty and order'.[33] At the local level, this meant *clean* newspaper on the table for every meal!

Most kindergartens were held in church halls which adapted themselves ill to kindergarten needs. At Richmond, Dr Helen Sexton advised closing the baby room—that is, the section of the kindergarten for three-year-olds—because of its sheer physical unsuitability.[34] Only with reluctance did the committee agree that 'it is better policy to have less children and hygienic conditions than a large number crowded into the available space'. Indeed, the gardens for children were, physically, far from the Froebelian ideal. Isabel Henderson wrote in 1911:

> In nearly every kindergarten, there are serious deficiencies from a sanitary point of view. In many cases the equipment is poor, especially as regards furniture and material for occupations and games; inadequate sanitary conveniences and absence of space for out-door work and children's gardens are far too common, and in practically all cases the lavatory provision is very unsuitable. In many kindergartens the accommodation is strained to its utmost and particularly in Carlton and Burnley the directors have long lists of children awaiting admission to the kindergarten.[35]

From homes of great poverty, sometimes of neglect and occasionally of cruelty, the early kindergarten children flourished in their primitive, ordered, loving environment. Miss Fawcett, director at West Melbourne, spoke of this to a meeting of the Directors' Association formed in 1910:

> After the bustle and unceasing change in the streets, the Kindergarten was a place where the same lovely things were done in much the same way, day after day; where questions were answered, and where unity was always found. In his new environment the child learned how to look up to God and how to look down on little children and pets, his ideals unconsciously became higher in an atmosphere of love and tenderness.[36]

No kindergarten was without its piano, and singing and dancing were a novel joy to such children. At some a small garden could be started and children from an environment of brick and stone and galvanised iron could watch the plants grow, or even take saucers of damp cotton-wool home with them where cress would presently sprout. There were occasional outings—to the Zoo or the Botanical Gardens; there were special days before Easter and Christmas when the local committee would provide the necessities for a party; even on ordinary days there were biscuits (broken—provided by Swallow and Ariell) and cocoa (by courtesy of Griffith Bros). In some of the poorest kindergartens, a mid-day meal was given to the children, when it was learnt that some were coming to kindergarten without breakfast.

The early kindergarteners, however, were not concerned merely with the physical needs of the children and, through them, of their families. They saw their task as a moral one as well; they spoke of character building, of fostering virtues such as kindliness, gentleness, politeness and unselfishness; they were concerned to train tomorrow's citizens—a theme much stressed during World War I when the children in the kindergartens were seen as successors 'to fill the place of those whose talents are lost to the State' and kindergarteners were urged to strive 'that in their formative years may be implanted right ideals of conduct and that they may be trained physically, mentally and morally to become later worthy citizens of our glorious Empire'.[37] One annual report defined the work of the kindergartens thus:

> Our work aims not at relieving distress in the home but at preventing it, not at reclaiming a child but at training him in such habits as will save him from falling into those habits which may lead even to crime.[38]

Newspapers wrote of kindergartens as 'an elevating and reforming agency'[39]; men in public places spoke of the 'great social benefit' of kindergarten[40]; local committees spoke of 'the moral influence'[41] of the kindergarten and of its part in 'building a healthy, noble, God-fearing nation'[42]; one member of the council even held that 'the rescue of a child from bad conditions was the primary object of the kindergarten'.[43]

This last claim, however, was probably not a true statement of the view held by most active members of the Union—its executive and its directors; as shown in the introduction, physical and moral improvement was *not* the only aim of the movement. Froebel was a teacher. The kindergarten was in essence an educational institution, though as yet only a handful of people, even a handful of educationalists, had grasped the concept of the intellectual training of the pre-school child; indeed, public acceptance of the concept did not become widespread till after World War II. This lack of general awareness of the educational purpose and value of kindergartens, coupled with the very evident need for physical and social assistance to needy children and families, led inevitably to the kindergarten movement being linked with philanthropy. Though the wealthy, probably, would never have contributed directly to the education of the small slum child, many of them were prepared to contribute to his physical betterment and his moral uplift—partly from reasons of compassion, partly from reasons of expediency, as kindergartens were cheaper and safer than gaols. As an early historian of the NSW Kindergarten Union succinctly remarked:

> A cry for reform in education would have been at that time unheeded, but it was comparatively easy to arouse interest in the conditions of neglected children and the imminent danger of larrikinism.[44]

The educational aim necessitated the provision of trained kindergarteners. The voluntary helper had her place, so later did the social worker and the nursing sister, but trained educators were the prime essential, and preferably women trained under the eye and according to the standards of the education commitee of the Union. That such students, the kindergarteners of the future, would have the philanthropic interests of the movement at heart was assumed, and rightly assumed. No one uninterested in the total welfare of the small, often smelly, slum child and of his poor, often ignorant family, would have been prepared to take up such a career, especially at the tiny salary just mentioned. The frequently postulated dichotomy in the early pre-school movement between philanthropists and educationalists does not, to my mind, exist. Within the early Union it is not possible to separate the philanthropist from the educationalist; one was both.

The task of training kindergarteners was tackled by the Union almost from its inception. Early in 1909 the Victorian Education Department put forward a scheme whereby training would be in the hands of a kindergarten board, comprising representatives of the Melbourne Teachers College sub-primary section and the Union's education committee.[45] The Union, however, was not then prepared to become involved with the education department[46] and at that time rejected even Dr Smyth's offer of rooms at the teachers college for lectures. One member of council—Dr Charles Strong, former Presbyterian minister and founder of the Australian Church—resigned because of this decision. Instead, the Union decided that Marion Champlin should give lectures to kindergarten students and that the Collingwood Mission Kindergarten should be used for practical training. Mrs Champlin was appointed supervisor of all free kindergartens in June 1909[47], and in August the Teachers and Schools Registration Board recognized this kindergarten as a training school for 'sub-primary teachers'.[48] (The three possible classifications for registered teachers reached no lower than this.)

To qualify for entry into the Union's first training school, a girl required a Junior Public—that is a Year 10—pass.[49] Her mornings were spent in 'practical work with the children' and her afternoons at lectures in:

> the various subjects that constitute the theory of the system. First there is psychology, and Froebel's philosophy as found in his 'Mother Play'; then Nature Study; lessons in the theory and practice of the Gifts and Occupations—paper folding and cutting, drawing, modelling, weaving, sewing, basketry and so forth. With these subjects go singing, physical culture, and games, special work in drawing and colour-work, and finally the study of children's literature, programme-work and method.

When Marion Champlin gave this outline of what sounds like a very crowded curriculum, in May 1909, she added that so far six students were enrolled and that each paid £15/15/– a year in fees.

By the end of that year, as Smyth and Miss Pye may well have foreseen, the Union was worried. Their training for the first year of the two-year course seemed adequate and in capable hands, but how could they ensure practical training in schools for the second year when experience with and observation of children up to eight years old was necessary? And how could the Union, whose total income for the year was £114 meet the expenses of training?[50] In December 1909 they again opened negotiations with Smyth 'on the assurance that the Free Kindergarten Union Training Institute would maintain its own independence'.[51]

An agreement was reached: the Union supervisor was to lecture to kindergarten students in the rooms which the Union rented in the Colonial Mutual Building; Union students were to attend the state college for their sub-primary lectures; in addition the supervisor, and occasionally a director, were to give lectures at the college to departmental as well as to Union students. Union students would receive their sub-primary practical training in the infant departments of state schools, under the supervision of Miss Pye, while selected Union kindergartens—four of them—were available to departmental students with Mrs Champlin as their supervisor. Fees of Union students were reduced to £10/10/- per annum, half of which was paid over by the Union to the Education Department.[52]

On this basis, the state government via the Education Department made the Union an annual grant of the then-substantial sum of £1000 per annum.[53] One condition of this grant was that where possible the Union was to undertake kindergarten work in crèches. It was in response to this requirement that the Collingwood, Richmond, and North Melbourne crèches affiliated with the Union, while children from the Prahran crèche were admitted to the nearby

Hornbrook kindergarten Mrs Deakin formally accepted the government grant and its conditions in July 1910.[54] She noted inter alia that, though the government money could be used for the support of free kindergartens and for the salaries of kindergarten teachers, it was not to be used for the training of students or for the 'expense of any training institution'. The Victorian Education Department—that is, Frank Tate pressured by John Smyth and Emeline Pye—which had been instrumental in persuading the government to make the grant to the Union, did not favour the idea of a separate kindergarten training college.[55] In their view, the education of the child was one whole process, a total undertaking, and it should be undertaken throughout by one instrumentality. They did not intend funds channelled through the Education Department to be used to set up a rival training establishment.

The 1910 arrangement, which appears to an outside observer to have been fair and sensible, did not last. Before a year had passed, it was the apparent cause of a major upheaval within the Union, and within five years the whole joint Union-department training scheme had been abandoned amid mutual recriminations.

The trouble within the Union seems to have stemmed from the position of Mrs Champlin, the supervisor. After the first formal executive was elected in March 1910, Mrs Champlin no longer held her former position, as a member of the old sub-committee, on the education committee. Mrs Champlin therefore resigned, saying, possibly with truth, that being on neither executive nor education committee, she could not 'keep in touch with the work'.[56] On being assured that this situation would be rectified, she agreed to withdraw her resignation, and she was present at an executive meeting on 2 August 1911 though only 'by invitation'.[57] At this meeting a letter was read from 22 directors and assistants expressing their support of Mrs Champlin, and the executive was 'unanimous in its confidence in her and in recognition of her worth'. The word 'unanimous' seems dubious, as both Miss Henderson, convener of the education committee, and Dr Smyth, one of its members, were on the executive, and the education committee was, in fact, highly critical of Mrs Champlin's work as supervisor.[58] (No one, then or later, seems to have doubted her dedication to kindergarten ideals, or her own capacity as a kindergarten teacher.)

One student, so the education committee's report stated, had been doing her practical training for 18 weeks with a young, inexperienced director, without one visit from the supervisor. There were 32 kindergarten students training in 1911 (this number including the departmental students) yet Mrs Champlin, despite requests from the convener, had submitted reports on only nine of them. The concern of the education committee is understandable; the whole standing of the Union with the Education Department, their own credibility as serious educationalists with rigorous and rigorously enforced standards was, they felt, being jeopardized by someone whose heart was not in the training scheme and whose behaviour as supervisor they castigated as 'unsystematic and unmethodical'. They added, for good measure, that Mrs Champlin 'took too many holidays'.

It is not easy to reconcile these criticisms with the evident enthusiasm of the supervisor's account of her training course only two years earlier, before the Education Department was involved. One could assume, though without evidence, that her enthusiasm had waned as the arduous everyday routine of lecturing and supervision overwhelmed her. It seems more probable, however, to postulate that Mrs Champlin did not favour the Union's training agreement with the Department. Mrs Champlin had been a member of Annie Westmoreland's staff in the RKTS in the comfortable suburb of Kew; she was a member of the Incorporated Association of Secondary Teachers of Victoria and sat on its committee considering primary and sub-primary work.[59] The fees at the RKTS were £2/2/- a term—that is, nearly £17 for a two-year course in a period when there were four terms in a year. The Union's fees for a course at the Collingwood Kindergarten originally £15/15/-, were now £10/10/- per annum. Such high fees were possible only for daughters of well-to-do parents. Did Mrs Champlin not fancy initiating the more plebeian daughters of a less affluent class into kindergarten work? Was she one of those who could not equate Froebel's 'gardens' with asphalt playgrounds? (Yet her own Collingwood Mission Kindergarten was far from horticultural!) It is a pity that it is not known if the student who went unsupervised for 18 weeks was a departmental or a Union student; similarly whether the nine on whom Mrs Champlin did submit the required reports were the Union students among the total enrolment. Be that as it may, the fact is clear that by mid-1911 Mrs Champlin no longer satisfied the Union's education committee, now committed to its training agreement with the Education Department.

On learning their precise criticisms of her, Marion Champlin promptly resigned for the second and final time. Mrs Deakin, president, Mrs Wischer, secretary, and Mrs McMillan, executive member, resigned with her, accusing the education committee of disloyalty to the Union. Passions ran high. Finally, the Union council—a smaller and much more powerful body then than now—intervened. Their investigations assured them that the education committee was guilty of no disloyalty as their report appeared to have been well grounded, as it was made privately to the executive and not to the outside world, and as the committee clearly had at heart the best interests of the Union in its training capacity.[60]

The education committee being once again restored to favour withdrew its blanket resignation; the vacant post of supervisor was advertised, while Miss Mary Lush, Miss Wilson's assistant at Carlton, temporarily filled the breach—for the first, but by no means the last, time coming to the Union's rescue in time of need. The vacancies for president and secretary remained. The council, in a crucial vote, divided evenly on the issue of whether the president and secretary should be asked to reconsider their resignations. The two women, finding to their chagrin that they did not have the strong support they had expected, let their resignations stand.[61] A new president, Mrs Robert Harper, and a new secretary, Mrs T.A. a'Beckett, were elected, and the education committee's recommendation of a new supervisor for 1912, Miss Ethel Lett, was accepted.[62]

Looking back over nearly 70 years, what is to be made of this unfortunate fracas? It is clear that the defective constitution of the Union was much to blame. Marion Champlin had not been on the education committee since May 1909, nor on the executive since March 1910. When she ceased to be director of the Collingwood Mission Kindergarten and became supervisor of Union kindergartens in June 1909, the Union was undertaking alone its teacher training program, for which she was responsible. Arrangements made subsequently with the Education Department must have been made without her official participation in discussions or her formal consent or dissent. Whether or not Mrs Champlin resented her exclusion from the decision-making process, her real objection seemed to be to the whole concept of joint training, to the sharing of facilities and staff, to combining a large, inclusive state bureaucracy with a small, specialist, voluntary body. The Union's defective constitution had made possible the fait accompli with which she was presented, which required her to be partly responsible for the pre-school training of state as well as Union students, but not wholly responsible for the training of either.

The constitutional weakness of the Union was as clear to contemporaries as it is today, and a new constitution was drawn up without delay.[63] The relevant sections of this 1912 constitution were firstly, that the convener of the education committee was to be ex officio on the executive (Miss Henderson was there only because the council had elected her personally); secondly, that the supervisor was ex officio on the education committee, though without a vote on matters 'affecting her own position and duties'; and thirdly, that she might 'by her request only' attend, but not vote at, executive meetings. In short, she was the paid employee of a voluntary organization, but the Union in this way would be able to use her expertise and advice to the full, while she, on her side, would be able 'to keep in touch with the work'.

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Chapter 2

The Training Problem 1912–17

Under the wise, mature guidance of Mrs Robert Harper, backed by the vigour and sharp intelligence of Mrs T.A. a'Beckett, the FKU picked itself up and continued on its way. But the path ahead was not a smooth nor an easy one. There was a new supervisor, an unknown quantity, with the unenviable task of taking the place of Marion Champlin who, only a few months before, had received such a vote of confidence from her directors and assistants. There was the recurring worry of relations with the Education Department and the whole question of the training of students; and there was the unfortunate impression of dissension within the ranks given to the outside world on which the Union depended for its charitable contributions.

The loss at one blow late in 1911 of three members of the executive, including both president and secretary, was not a matter to be easily forgotten even with the goodwill of all parties. Unfortunately this goodwill did not exist on both sides. Early in 1912, the Fitzroy Crèche-Kindergarten withdrew from affiliation with the Union[1]; its local committee president was Mrs Deakin, and its secretary Mrs McMillan. In her letter formally withdrawing the kindergarten, Mrs McMillan gave as the committee's reason 'that the policy of the Union has become of too educational a nature for the successful carrying out of a philanthropic movement'. The Union executive and council were naturally perturbed at this and appointed a sub-committee to inquire into the charge. In May, the sub-committee produced the gratifying report:

> Although the educational standard has been raised, yet after a careful and thorough

> investigation, the good results of the Kindergarten had been abundantly proved by the improved conditions of the homes and children of the very poorest classes.[2]

M. Hansen, writing in July of the same year, supported their view, saying that 'the missionary and philanthropic work has been greatly extended and is as active as ever'.[3]

However the matter did not end there. In October, an article appeared in *The Herald* which, after an introductory account of the foundation and aims of the Union, devoted most of its space to statements by Mrs Deakin, Mrs Wischer and Mrs McMillan, all derogatory of the Union's present work and tending, whether or not deliberately, to rob it of much public support and sympathy which, to repeat, were based on its philanthropic appeal. 'Departure from the Froebelian principles of child culture discouraged all who had the real interests at heart', wrote Mrs Deakin, and accused the kindergartens of becoming formal and instructional, places where children are taught as in state schools, rather than having their 'budding tendencies playfully fostered'. Mrs Wischer went further, saying that 'the true Free Kindergartener is . . . a missionary first and a teacher afterwards'. She deplored 'the tendency to form regular classes' and stated that the kindergarten movement was originally intended 'to be largely philanthropic, formed chiefly to bring sunshine and love into many otherwise dreary little lives'. Mrs McMillan used the fact that the Union reported annually to the Education Department as evidence that affiliated kindergartens were 'to a great extent under the control of the Education Department'. Sentiment, love, sympathetic suggestion and 'the great mother spirit' were, she said, being replaced by 'rigid rule and discipline'.[4]

To these charges, the Union executive made a full and prompt reply.[5] With the sole exception of Marion Champlin, they said, all original directors remained at their kindergartens and had 'not altered their aims nor their methods'. With the sole exception of Fitzroy, no local committee had protested. The government grant received through the Education Department necessitated an annual report to that Department; local committees and all subscribers also received annual reports; the Department had the right, no less than committees and public, to know how funds were spent. A special FKU sub-committee had recently found no diminution in the philanthropic work and spirit of the kindergartens. Finally, Froebel himself was an educationalist.

> He did not believe in haphazard management nor in allowing children merely to do as they like . . . The education committee have held by the views and methods of Froebel throughout; knowing how easy it is for any voluntary charitable organisation to degenerate into mere sentimentalism, or to become slipshod in management, they have insisted from the beginning on the employment of trained kindergarteners and on the thorough supervision of the work . . . We should be failing in our duty to the

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> noble band of workers in and under the Union if we allowed any section of the public to think that the highest welfare of the children under our charge has not been always, is not now, and will not be at all times, our deepest and most pressing concern.

This particular exchange seems to have ended at this point. The work went on; voluntary helpers attended faithfully, local committees raised funds, directors and assistants remained at their posts, an increasing number of students applied for training. By the outbreak of World War I there were in Melbourne 20 free kindergartens; pleasingly they included two new kindergartens in Fitzroy, one connected with the Presbyterian Church[6], the other with the rebuilt crèche in Napier Street.[7] There would seem to be no doubt about the continuing stress on philanthropic work. The St Kilda Free Kindergarten moved in 1913 to a poorer area, bringing 'under its influence some of the poorest and most neglected in the neighbourhood'. At Carlton, a 'boot fund' was established 'enabling struggling mothers to keep little feet comfortable during the winter'. At Montague, there was an appeal for clothing 'in that very poor suburb [where] most of the homes reveal dire want'.[8] Conscious of the anomalous position it presented to the public with one foot in the philanthropic and one in the educational camp, the Union carefully defined a kindergarten as 'neither a nursery school, a playground, nor a school but a combination of the three for it aims at the all-round development of the child through educative play'.[9]

Meanwhile the problem of training the kindergarteners who were to conduct the kindergartens along true Froebelian lines remained. The Union's education committee was not entirely happy about its close relationship with the Education Department. An annual report was one thing; but undue control or influence was quite another. The arrangements made with the teachers college in 1910 continued when Miss Lett replaced Mrs Champlin as supervisor. In 1912 there were 40 students training with the Union and in 1913, 52[10]; these included the Education Department's sub-primary trainees. At the rate the kindergartens were multiplying there was, despite this pleasing intake, a shortage of directors and assistants. Miss Henderson stressed not only the personal qualities required in a kindergartener but also the need for 'the best possible lectures and demonstrations from the best possible lecturers who can enthuse their students not only with the purely intellectual part of their training but who can inspire them with sympathy'.[11]

In an effort to provide more opportunity for students to gain sub-primary training, the Union asked several leading independent girls schools if they would accept its students for their practical experience[12], hoping that such a scheme would have the side effect of interesting senior pupils in undertaking kindergarten work. The response to this suggestion was not encouraging, probably because of the Union's known link with the state training college. John

Smyth, meanwhile, was becoming increasingly dissatisfied with facilities available for Union students at his state college. If the Union intended to continue co-operating with the college, he said, the buildings there should be enlarged to include more lecture space and a common room for kindergarten trainees.[13] He asked the council of the Union to support a deputation by him, as principal of the college, to the government for funds for improved facilities. He hastened to assure the Union that such support, now, would not preclude the Union from later, if it wished, opening a training college of its own, possibly with a residential hostel attached. Hansen supported Smyth: after all, the government—via the state college—provided a major part of the kindergarteners' training and the Union therefore had every right and reason to urge the government to improve and enlarge the college's 'overtaxed' premises. The condition of the government grant to the Union which prevented any part of that annual £1000 being used for training virtually forced the Union to make extensive use of state training facilities; this condition having been made by government, the Union could reasonably support the state college in asking government assistance with accommodation.

On the FKU council, one objection was raised to Smyth's suggestion, namely that the time was inappropriate for the Union to be seen openly working with the Education Department in an appeal to government, because of criticism of the Union as coming increasingly under the influence of the department and 'emphasizing the Educational side of the work to the detriment of the missionary and philanthropic'. This objection was not supported, however, and six members of the council were appointed, with Smyth, as a deputation to the Premier. The inclusion of Mrs Harper and Rev. Detterich, of the Collingwood Mission Kindergarten local committee, on the deputation may have served to allay the fears of the philanthropically minded public. In the event, the deputation saw the Minister of Education who made sympathetic noises; no action resulted.[14]

There is evidence of some friction between the Union and the Department over the working of the 1910 training arrangements, though its exact nature is not clear. In 1913 a revised plan was drawn up by the Department and heavily criticized by the Union.[15] Though it is doubtful if these revised proposals were ever put into effect, the Union evidently felt that the Department was trying to exercise too much control in setting standards, allocating student teachers to practising kindergartens, and in assessing students. In August of that year, Frank Tate—who had kept very much in the background, but who, as Director of Education, was ultimately responsible—being aware through Smyth of growing hostility to the Department within the Union, spoke at the Union's annual meeting and attempted to allay their fears:

> In the administration of the [government] grant and the whole organisation of its philanthropic and educational work there was every desire on the part of the Education Department to give a free hand to the Union.[16]

Smyth and Tate were in fact in the traditional cleft stick. They were not happy with the existing arrangements for training kindergarten teachers; the agreement, even if carried out conscientiously and wholeheartedly and tolerantly by both sides, was at best a messy compromise. Yet, if the Union was pushed too far by the Department in its desire to order and tidy up the situation, there was the possibility that the Union might break its ties with the Department and attempt to set up its own training institution, similar to the college which the NSW Union had been conducting for some years. Then the Department would have no control at all over the training of the Union's student kindergarteners, and the Union's free kindergartens might well be closed to state sub-primary students. Besides, a separate kindergarten training college would impose an intolerable strain on the Union's finances; the quality of training, they felt, would undoubtedly decline; and ultimately the whole young, hopeful, but vulnerable union edifice might collapse. Smyth and Tate knew too well the value of kindergarten training as part of the education of young children to face this prospect without dismay.

Union and Department continued to work together in an atmosphere of growing dissatisfaction throughout 1914 when total student numbers reached 63.[17] The Union was particularly distressed about the placement of departmental students in Union kindergartens. The girls were a great help, they acknowledged, but they were moved from kindergarten to kindergarten two or three times a year which disrupted the work and unsettled the children, as well as creating extra labour for a director who had periodically to 'break-in' new students. In addition, they had holidays and examinations, and who was to take their place as useful off-siders in the kindergartens then? Voluntary helpers were willing, but it was unfair to expect them to appear only occasionally on an irregular basis. Most importantly, these departmental trainees were sub-primary students who would work ultimately in the infant departments of state schools; the Union was concerned primarily with the training of its own students for its own kindergartens.[18] Union objections had stung Smyth, late in 1913, into suggesting that if the Union would not co-operate in making several free kindergartens available for departmental students, then the state would open its own practising kindergartens.[19] This was probably a threat rather than a serious promise, but it serves to illustrate the deterioration in relations between the two bodies. The Education Department, Smyth in particular, solidly supported by Emeline Pye, had played a vital role in founding the Union. Now, that selfsame Union had only two departmental representatives on its executive, and appeared to make use of the Department solely for purposes of receiving the government grant.

Smyth and Tate had seen the free kindergartens as the first rung on a splendid ladder of total education for children; now the Union was refusing to play the part assigned to it. The situation, Smyth felt, was intolerable. The Union, he wrote to Tate, should never have meddled in teacher training. For Smyth, there was a deeper grief, too. He loved his state training college; indeed it was, in its existing form, virtually his creation. Smyth saw it as '*the* formative influence in the professional training of teachers'[20]—all teachers; but for union students it was not the only, nor even the major, influence. They came as passers-through; their theory there was divorced from their theory under their own supervisor, and from their practical work in the free kindergartens. This made a mockery of the concept of one educational edifice.

Finally Smyth elected to try strong-arm tactics and present the recalcitrant Union with an ultimatum. A brief, formal announcement, really a more extreme variation of the 1913 proposals, was presented to the Union late in 1914.[21] It began with the uncompromising statement that 'the whole arrangements for the training of students both in theory and practical work shall be in the hands of the Principal of the Teachers College', and continued in this vein. The Union would be virtually powerless to influence the training of the girls who were to staff its own kindergartens. The only concession was that the union supervisor and selected directors ('selected' by the principal of the college) were to give some lectures at the state college. This was unacceptable to the Union, and in November Smyth resigned from the union executive and education committee.[22]

There were three possible courses open to the Union. It could have accepted the ultimatum; it could have worked for a compromise, some arrangement which would have given it more influence and a greater say; or it could attempt the complete training of kindergarten students by itself. The first possibility being unacceptable and the second having been tried and found unworkable, the third remained. For a small, impoverished organization, it seemed out of the question. The Union's total income in 1914–15 was just over £3600[23] and this included the government grant of £1000 which was not available for training expenses. Staff, equipment, and accommodation would be needed. Probably awareness of these apparently insurmountable difficulties had led Smyth and Tate to take their uncompromising stand; now their bluff was called. The Union, under the leadership of two strong-minded women, Mrs (later Lady) Baldwin Spencer, wife of the well-known anthropologist, and Mrs a'Beckett, together with the implacable, and infinitely capable, Miss Isabel Henderson, severed its connection with the Education Department. The acting supervisor, Miss Irene McMeekin, formerly as Sister Vere, director of the Collingwood Mission Kindergarten, supported their decision, writing in December 1914 to Mrs a'Beckett, 'I guess for all of us the great temptation is to take the line of least resistance in our desire for peace . . . but there is such a thing as belief in a cause and that involves loyalty'.[24]

In 1915 and 1916, there was no two-year kindergarten course conducted by the Union. The Union undertook a course for voluntary helpers and another for Sunday-school teachers; its one-year course for a 'governess certificate' also continued; but none of these students was qualified for state registration as a sub-primary teacher. However, the City Free Kindergarten was still made available for practice and demonstration to departmental sub-primary trainees and, in 1915 and 1916, Mary Lush lectured to these girls at the teachers college. Half the fees of the Union students doing their second year in 1915 was handed over, as it had been previously, by the Department to the Union, which needed the money for its supervisor's salary.[25]

The atmosphere at the time of parting was not happy; there was understandable bitterness and suspicion on both sides. Tate, who after all had many other irons in the fire more important to him than the training of kindergarteners, wrote to the Union that he trusted that now 'the executive and local committees may be able to lend their energies towards the efficient administration of the local kindergartens'[26]—rather implying that they had failed to do this in the past. The Union smarted with its inability, for the time being, to provide, or to take part in the provision of, a training course for kindergarteners leading to state registration.

Yet they did not believe that they had had any choice but to 'go out into the wilderness alone', nor that the true Froebelian ethos could be imbibed by students at a state training institution. Five years before, Marion Champlin appears to have recognized the incompatibility of Union and Department; four years before, similar views had inspired some part of Mrs Deakin's impassioned outburst in *The Herald*. The Unionists were, after all, middle-class women of their period and, possibly unconsciously, they saw kindergarten teachers as young women of their own background who shared their own values and whose parents could pay substantially for their training. Similarly they could not equate their Froebelian ideal of gardens for little children, where growing plants were tenderly nurtured and gently guided, with the assumed formal regimentation and stark, asphalt playgrounds of the state schools.

The decision once taken, the Union lost no time in organizing a complete two-year training course of its own.[27] The first move, in August 1915, was to rent two rooms in Clyde House[28] as the present office in the Colonial Mutual Building was quite inadequate for teaching, even on a temporary basis. The education committee then drew up detailed plans for its independent two-year course, to start under the Union's incoming supervisor in 1917.[29] Finally in August 1917, this course received the approval of the Registration Board of the Council for Public Instruction, thus ensuring that successful candidates would become registered sub-primary teachers.[30] This was a major hurdle surmounted; without this registration, union-trained kindergarteners could not have obtained positions in any state or independent sub-primary schools or divisions of schools, and kindergarten work would have been cut off from the main stream of education—a prospect as unwelcome to the Union as it was to the Department. The chief credit for the organization of this course and the securing of registration must undoubtedly be given to Isabel Henderson; one can only marvel at the skill, time, and dedication of this remarkable woman, remembering that at this period she was the full-time principal of one of Melbourne's leading girls schools.

Smyth had not changed his views. On hearing of the proposed two-year course in 1916, he wrote sadly to Tate:

> It is a great pity . . . that the Union should undertake any training at all, seeing that the Teachers' College is willing to train all kinds of students; more especially is it a pity seeing that all the money the Kindergarten Union receives is needed for kindergarten work . . . I think the Department is interested in this matter seeing that it gives the Union a large annual grant.[31]

It might have been possible for the Department to have the grant withdrawn; indeed, correspondence between the Minister of Education and Tate suggests that this was considered.[32] The Department finally decided that, as the Union would not give up its intention to train its own students, the best educational policy was for them to retain their grant, while the registration board would ensure adequate professional standards. This anomalous situation, whereby the Union, though it had no professional link with the Education Department, received its government grant via that department, continued till 1944.

The practical training facilities previously provided for departmental students in the City Free Kindergarten continued till 1918[33], but from 1917, when their own two-year course began, the Union refused to permit their supervisor to lecture, as she had done under the old arrangement, at the teachers college.[34] This angered not only Smyth, who rather quaintly described the decision as 'sudden' and 'unexpected'[35], but also Tate who now emerged from the shadows and wrote officially as Director of Education to Mrs a'Beckett:[36]

> For myself I have given up trying to understand why it is so difficult in Victoria to bring about reasonable co-operation of those who ought to be working disinterestedly for the good of education. To the best of my belief the Education Department has throughout this business tried to be helpful and sympathetic. If the members of the

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> Free Kindergarten Union do not wish to avail themselves of the facilities provided by the Department I shall certainly do nothing further to induce them to do so. A very great amount of time of senior officials has been devoted to the affairs of the Union—time which I now see could have been very much better spent developing our own work.

For some years, not surprisingly, communication between Union and Department was rare and formal, each going its own way. For the Union this meant a new, independent venture, which for long was to absorb much of its time, effort, and resources. Luckily, in 1917, another of the recurrent worries of the first ten years reached a happy solution: the problem of a satisfactory supervisor.

Marion Champlin's successor was Miss Ethel Lett; she remained only two years with the Union, and her term of office was not a happy one. Miss Lett was an English woman, and her immediate reaction to Melbourne's kindergartens was critical. Only a fragment of one of her reports remains, but it is dated as early as April 1912[37], so she would seem to have been rushing to judgment. In it, she complained of 'lack of correlation in the work'; of too little 'nature study' (Where could they study it? one wonders); of too little attention to the particular interests of small boys; of insufficient time given to moral training, to the development of the qualities of unselfishness, obedience, and courtesy; of insufficient music in the kindergartens. Interestingly, she wrote: 'There is a lack of spontaneity among the children owing to the teacher telling the children what to do instead of allowing the children to discover for themselves and suggest the necessary actions'. Her implied belief in self-direction makes her a pioneer in the pre-school world of 1912. Miss Lett concluded her report by mentioning that the directors and assistants had asked her to help them with a study of Froebel 'so that they may have a deeper grasp of Froebelian principles'. Clearly, by overseas standards, the FKU directors left something to be desired; it may well have been the education committee's realization of this which stiffened their resolve to part from the Education Department—and its built-in propensity for 'telling the children what to do'—and their realization may well have been sharpened by Miss Lett's words.

It seems, however, that some at least of the directors were not happy with Miss Lett's criticisms, especially as these were, they alleged, made 'publicly'—that is, one presumes, when they could be overheard, by students, perhaps, or parents or members of local committees. In May 1912 a special meeting of the education committee was called to consider two letters received by the convener.[38] The first, from Miss Lett, complained of the hostility of some of the directors towards her; the second, from Miss Nora Semmens, original director of the Burnley Free Kindergarten and a protegée of Miss

Westmoreland, objected to Miss Lett's criticism of the directors and to her 'programmes'—that is, to the plan of activities which she wished directors to follow in their kindergarten sessions. 'I feel', wrote Miss Semmens, 'that the programmes are not what kindergarten programmes should be; I consider that they are not true to kindergarten principles; they aim more at instruction than character building and I cannot conscientiously work with them'. Burnley was a 'practising' kindergarten for students; Miss Semmens asked permission to have the students withdrawn. This letter, taken in conjunction with Miss Lett's report written only a month before, is interesting; report and letter, in fact, each accuse the other of the same fault. Was the problem, perhaps, one of personality? Was it a case of the 'new broom'? Was it a case of resentment of an outsider? We have too little documentary evidence to attempt an answer, and can only follow the course of events as revealed in the education committee's minutes.

Miss Lett, when questioned by the committee on the charges in Miss Semmens's letter, made the revealing comment that Miss Semmens objected to her (Miss Lett's) 'programmes' because they were 'not adaptable to poorer children'. This placed the committee in a quandary; it was, we must remember, at this period that they were being charged with neglecting the 'philanthropic aspects of the work' and so forfeiting public support. Here they saw themselves faced with the opposite dilemma to that encountered with Mrs Champlin; here was a director who was not too little but too much educationally oriented! The committee adjourned for a few days to consider and finally came up with a formula to save all faces.[39] Miss Lett was advised to confer more often and more closely with her directors, clearly good advice in a small beleaguered community where unity and co-operation were essential; any criticism of the directors was to be made in private; students were not to be withdrawn from Burnley. A sub-committee appointed to consider Miss Semmens's charge that the supervisor's 'programmes were not true to kindergarten principles' investigated them and produced the reassuring conclusion that they were so, but that they were, perhaps, 'a little above the standard which the children in our kindergartens are capable of reaching'.[40] They did not 'at all aim more at instruction than character building'. What was in fact recommended was a somewhat simplified programme and more freedom for directors.

In September, the question arose of whether Miss Lett should be appointed for another year.[41] The education committee agreed that 'though she was not strong on the propaganda work of the Free Kindergarten movement, nor on the missionary side of the work of the Union, her work in connection with the training of students and the carrying out of the work in the kindergartens themselves is very good indeed'. Since the disturbance in May, things had been very much more harmonious; a new appointment could not be in the best interests of the Union at this juncture, and would besides be unfair to Miss Lett, who had taken over at a very difficult time and was just becoming acclimatized. She was invited to remain for a further twelve months, and 1913 seems to have been a relatively peaceful year. Perhaps, however, Miss Lett was never entirely happy in her position, for in August 1913 she handed in her resignation as from the end of the year, giving as the reason 'her desire to return to England'.[42]

The Union at once advertised the vacant post, not only in Melbourne, Sydney, and Adelaide, but also overseas, in New Zealand, the USA, and Canada. The salary offered was £200 per annum with travelling expenses of £30 for overseas candidates.[43] Ethel Lett had received £80 annually.[44] Clearly, with the imminent possibility of a complete break with the Education Department, the committee saw the position of supervisor as very important indeed. The appointee would not only be supervisor of all the union kindergartens, but she would be also, if the chafing tie with the Department were finally severed, the principal of a kindergarten training institution. They obviously expected a very superior supervisor at such a handsome salary.

Alas, the situation deteriorated again. The new appointee, Miss Dora Emson of Sydney, who was doing postgraduate work in the United States when she was offered the position, was warmly recommended by Sydney's Professor Anderson for 'her personal qualities'.[45] If Miss Lett had failed, at least at first, to get on with her *directors*, Miss Emson seems to have failed to get on with anyone! Within three months of her arrival in March, she was urging the education committee to reduce the numbers of children in the kindergartens, so that the remainder might have 'more perfect education'.[46] The education committee, stung by this, retorted in their report to council that they had never claimed to provide 'perfect education', but rather to 'influence as many children as possible'. They stated that their kindergartens were 'striving to do philanthropic work not purely educational'.

Miss Emson, apparently with her educational sights set higher than was realistic in existing Victorian conditions, had early issued Time Tables for all directors.[47] 'Too much time was being wasted', she said; 'there should not be a spare moment'. These fearsome documents—for there were two alternative schemes for using each precious second—allowed only fifteen minutes for a hasty lunch; one scheme allowed fifteen rapturous minutes for Free Play, the other only ten; both allotted only five minutes for a Rest Period. One cannot help feeling that the directors, at least, might have required more than this!

The whole matter of Miss Emson's criticisms and her approach to kindergarten work was exhaustively discussed by the council at its June meeting, and the views of the education committee were endorsed. Dr Constance Ellis, predictably a staunch education advocate, gave her opinion that providing 'conditions are good and there is enough fresh air, as many children as possible should be taken in'. Mr Hammand, president of the South Melbourne Mission Free Kindergarten, observed that 15 or 20 creche children attended that kindergarten and 'it was not possible to refuse' them. Council agreed that as many children as possible should be admitted to kindergartens as long as the regulations of the Board of Health were met.

In August 1914, Miss Emson asked for an assistant-supervisor.[48] Miss Lett, in the second year of her two-year stay, had been granted three hours clerical assistance a week.[49] Three names were considered by the executive who, from them, recommended to council Irene McMeekin, who had recently returned from study in England. Miss Emson spoke against this choice, in terms which cast 'considerable reflection on the training given to our Melbourne kindergarteners'. Several members of council, resenting her remarks, spoke warmly in favour of Miss McMeekin, and council supported her appointment as recommended by the executive. Miss Emson then announced that she would resign if Miss McMeekin were appointed. To adapt an old adage—she was and she did!

Irene McMeekin, beloved by the original generation of kindergarteners as Sister Vere, and by later generations as Mrs Cleverdon, was a state-trained sub-primary teacher from pre-union days, who had had pre-school training under Annie Westmoreland and later in England. Intellectually she was therefore eminently respectable, while her basic philanthropic motivation as one of the Sisters in the Methodist Mission could not be called in question. From August 1914 till mid-1916, while the education committee was absorbed in its dispute with the Education Department, the educational side of the Union's work fell on her as acting-supervisor. Her approach was gradual, her methods those of co-operation; she made haste slowly, and she had the inestimable advantage of being a known quantity. She and her directors and assistants knew and trusted each other. Under her, some of the kindergartens introduced the new Montessori material[50] and, in all, Froebelian methods were increasingly practised. 'We are not making any drastic changes in our kindergartens', she wrote in a reassuring annual report, 'but we are endeavouring to move forward educationally, and to render our work more lasting and effective'.[51]

In June 1916 Mrs Cleverdon left for England with her padre-husband[52]; for the next six months Mary Lush was acting-supervisor—again filling in in an emergency. It was while these two tried and trusted kindergarteners held the day-to-day work of the Union in their capable hands that the education committee was able, in peace, to develop its plans for the independent two-year training course. It came into being at the start of 1917, under the Union's fifth supervisor, Miss Jessie Glendinning.[53]

Chapter 3
The Early Kindergartens 1912–20

What were the early free kindergartens like? How can we, now, visualize them in the first ten or twelve years of the Union's existence? We must, for a start, rid ourselves of the contemporary image of a kindergarten as a place with wide windows facing the sun, opening to a broad terrace or verandah and, beyond, a grassed or tan-bark area with sand-pit, climbing frames, several tricycles, and perhaps, in summer, a shallow, portable paddling-pool. We must eliminate the mental impression of bright paint in primary colours, low lockers, low basins with running water and adjacent small-sized lavatories; so, too, we need to banish the small but immaculate stainless-steel kitchen, the roomy storeroom, the neat, welcoming, yet business-like director's office. You and I are visualizing the post-World War II kindergarten; the kindergartens we must now consider were those of our parents and grandparents, just before and during World War I. They present a very different picture.

In 1918, the WCTU Kindergarten in Richmond opened a much-needed new building. The Union was delighted with these fine, "weather-proof premises".[1] A year earlier, the Fitzroy Crèche-Kindergarten had been rebuilt; now it was a two-storey building and the big room on the second floor was 'open to fresh air and sunshine'.[2] We may well marvel at the implied state of decay of the earlier Richmond building, or regret the implied lack of fresh air and sunshine on the ground floor at Fitzroy. Possibly the most lurid account of a World War I type kindergarten is that given by Miss Glendinning in 1918[3], describing the Rokeby Street section of the Collingwood Mission Kindergarten.

> For some time the building has been falling to pieces . . . The woman who cleans

> the building told me she baled out ten buckets of water from the kindergarten after a recent rain fall. The rain soaks into the lockers and spoils the contents. Some weeks ago, the fence of the adjacent Marine Stores gave way and hundreds of glass bottles are strewn at one side of the children's playground.

Such conditions were considered unacceptable even in those Spartan days; the Rokeby Street kindergarten—it was really only an annexe of the main Collingwood Mission Kindergarten—was closed, and the children admitted to Gipps Street where the premises were considered 'quite suitable' except for the 'concrete playground'. But its mere existence and acceptance for some ten years remains a relevant fact.

Indeed, some kindergartens which were adversely criticized were nevertheless kept open, the alternative being no kindergarten at all which was considered worse. Thus, in 1919, Dr Helen Sexton, the Union's first medical officer, described the City Crèche-Kindergarten as 'most unsatisfactory, mainly owing to the building being overcrowded'[4] but the need was such that the kindergarten was continued in this same building, to be a source of anxiety for many years to come.

Even kindergartens held in premises specially built for the purpose would have seemed stark to us. Records survive from the free kindergarten in Buckhurst Street, Montague, the Lady Northcote, for instance. In June 1914, two local committee members offered to donate a kerosene heater because on visiting they 'had found the room so chilly and the children looking so cold that they thought there should be some way of warming the room'. Regretfully the committee declined this offer because of the risk of fire; the room, it seems, was used for Sunday School which had 'some very rough and wild young people among its scholars'.[5] So the Montague pre-schoolers had to be content with the 'warm, woollen garments' made by the committee ladies for sale to mothers at low prices.

Already, the introduction to this story has quoted at length Mary Lush's assessment of the effects of crowded city life on young children and of the ways in which a kindergarten could be of benefit to them. All free kindergartens in those days were in crowded areas, and like Miss Lush all directors were concerned at the evil effects of city life on children, seeing the correction or alleviation of such effects as one of the main purposes of the kinderarten. The genuine want, the city child's undoubted need of help—physical, educational, emotional and social help—permeates the story of the Union's early years. World War I did not improve matters; unemployment increased, prices rose, wages—in days before regular cost-of-living adjustments—lagged behind. Increasing numbers of children seem to have lacked adequate food and clothing; housing conditions deteriorated; the entry of some mothers into war work left many pre-school children to their own devices, often roaming the streets. In the first five weeks of its existence, the crèche opened at the City Free Kindergarten in 1915 accepted 108 babies for full-day care[6]; other crèche-kindergartens reported similar large numbers and spasmodic attendance, and opened for longer than the three customary kindergarten hours. Miss McMeekin, though understanding the circumstances necessitating this, was not entirely happy, feeling that 'mothers should be trained to take some responsibility for their children'.[7]

Extra hours posed a problem for directors. If they cared for children for longer hours in the kindergarten, how were they to visit homes, as was their expected afternoon duty? Yet, on the other hand, how could one visit a working mother? There seemed to be no doubt as to the value of the visiting policy. Many kindergarteners saw themselves as 'true social reformers. We begin with the child . . . and we plant principles that we believe will never be eradicated . . . We accompany the child into the home'.[8] They felt that many mothers were 'helped and cheered in their hours of difficulty and despondency'[9], and derived great comfort from 'the visits of loving women'. A conscientious director might make 30 or 40 home visits a month. Miss Glendinning was very impressed with the work of the FKU directors when she became supervisor, and was amazed at the scope of their activities—not only the actual work with the 1200 children in the kindergartens, but with the home visiting, the 'guilds' or weekly after-school groups for older girls and boys who had moved on from kindergarten to state school, and the monthly mothers meetings. The Union council discussed exhaustively in 1917 the aims, value, and conduct of mothers meetings.[10] One after another, representatives of local committees spoke in glowing terms of the social and practical benefits conferred by these gatherings which were usually informal evenings with sometimes a brief talk on child hygiene or management from an outside speaker, like a doctor, dentist, nurse, or the supervisor, after which parents could ask questions and then have a cup of tea together. 'Without the Union', Miss Glendinning wrote, 'we should have the children left all day in the streets, picking up dirt in more senses than one'.[11] More pragmatic in her approach than Miss McMeekin, she added: 'It is useless to say that mothers should care for these little children. You have only to visit the districts where there are no free kindergartens to see how futile such a remark really is'.

During the war and immediate post-war years, the directors and their assistants faced many other problems, not least the shortage of voluntary helpers.[12] These girls and women, an integral part of kindergartens since pre-union days, were in short supply, when wartime activities like the Red Cross and the VAD absorbed many of them. Yet, especially when the supply of students was curtailed during the hiatus between departmental and Union training, they were desperately needed—so much so that Miss McMeekin organized a special course for voluntary helpers[13], and her successor arranged in 1918 for a special one-year scholarship for a voluntary helper.[14] Local committees offered a second scholarship, feeling 'that, without the help of the voluntary helpers, the work of the kindergartens could not be carried on, and that the offer might in some measure help to encourage and stimulate them in their work.'[15]

Still numbers were below requirements and directors found themselves irritatingly occupied with domestic chores in their kindergartens. In 1916, local committees had been asked by the council to make 'adequate arrangements . . . for the preparation of lunch, washing up and cleaning the Kindergarten rooms in order that the Director and Assistant may not be obliged to give undue time to this to the detriment of their purely Kindergarten work'.[16] In most cases this seems to have been achieved by the employment of a few mothers, paid a trifling sum, to do the domestic work. The close association of these poorer, uneducated women with the trained professionals was invaluable in cementing between kindergarten staff and children's mothers mutual feelings of respect and affection: respect on the one hand for those who bore the burden of poverty and ceaseless toil, and on the other for the skill and dedication of the expert. One woman was desolate, fearing that in some way she must have displeased her director who had not asked her to scrub the bare boards of the kindergarten floor, a task she regarded as her prerogative; at the time she was eight months pregnant.

Directors and assistants were, as usual, scarce. Prices, but not salaries, rose during the war. The £40 per annum received by most assistants was 'not a living wage', declared the annual report angrily in 1919[17]; yet some assistants were still receiving only £30. Miss Henderson wrote to the Minister of Education in 1916 on Lady Spencer's behalf, urging an increase of £400 annually in the government grant so that directors and assistants might receive £80 and £50 respectively, and even hinting that a £ for £ grant should be considered. She received a noncommital reply and the grant remained unchanged.[18]

Indeed financial worries were acute in the infant Union. Even before wartime inflation, the executive was desperate for funds. In September 1912, a review of finances revealed that £3052 had been received from voluntary subscriptions and affiliation fees in the year 1911–12, while the government grant, originated when there were only eight free kindergartens, remained at £1000, though there were now seventeen kindergartens.[19] Successful approaches were made to various charitable trusts, such as the Felton Bequest and the Walter and Eliza Hall Trust, and the money received was used to meet pressing requirements, most often equipment in new kindergartens; but it was not possible to increase salaries. In 1913 the Union succeeded in gaining inclusion in the Wattle Day Appeal[20], held annually for various charities; in that year they received £85 from this appeal.[21] The sum fell to £30 in the second year—almost certainly a reflection of the giving to specific wartime charities—but thereafter rose again to £180, £665 and £545.[22] Their share in the money received from the Wattle Day collections must have heartened many a struggling local committee. St Kilda, for instance, had written in its 1914 report:

> It seems right to say openly and candidly that the committee has been disheartened, disappointed and almost dismayed by the poor response to its appeals for financial assistance. It is difficult to conceive more useful work than that of the Free Kindergarten, and it is equally difficult to understand why more generous support is not accorded to it.[23]

Union finances, though they benefited from public appeals and charitable trusts, suffered from the reduction of students' fees which followed the break with the Education Department. The £148 received (partly as a refund from the Department) in 1915/16 fell to only £47 in the following year. Receipts from fees certainly rose again when the Union's own two-year course was operating, bringing in £76 in 1917/18 and £122 in 1918/19; these increases were, however, almost precisely balanced by the expenses of the new course—£83 and £116 respectively.[24] In 1918 the Union was forced to obtain an overdraft (£250 on the security of War Loan Bonds) from the Bank of New South Wales.[25] It was the first of many.

Without the social position and contacts of most members of the Union executive, their undoubted 'pull' in the right places, the situation would have been much worse. From the start the Union enjoyed vice-regal patronage—occasionally nominal, more often, as in the case of Lady Northcote, expressed in genuine personal interest and material assistance. The presidents of the Union were 'well-connected'—the wife of a prime minister, of a wealthy and well-known philanthropist and member of parliament, of a university professor and distinguished anthropologist, of an eminent lawyer from an established Melbourne family. The women they gathered round them were of the same kind as were many members of local committees. This was inevitable and reflects the society of the time. In days when welfare was not considered a duty of government, it fell to individual charity to care for the weaker members of the community. This was regarded as normal; the upper and middle-class woman had her duties and obligations; she did not toil for her bread; probably she did not cook her family's meals or clean her own house; but one of her responsibilities was to assist those less fortunate than herself. This was a duty laid down in Scripture and reinforced by current expectations. To perform such a duty she required time and money; the achievements of the early Union prove that both these prerequisites were possessed by its founding mothers.

The first honorary secretaries of the Union must have worked very hard indeed. (They were Mrs Annie Watson-Lister 1908–10, Mrs Victor Wischer 1910–11, Mrs T.A. a'Beckett 1911–15, Miss Lynn Teare 1915–19.) A paid typist was appointed in 1910 to work four hours a month[26] but this arrangement lasted only three months.[27] Probably the expense was found to be too great, for in 1912, when pressure of work became such that some permanent clerical assistance became essential, the government agreed that some of the grant could be expended on a secretary's salary.[28] This was £50 per annum and the secretary was required to give clerical assistance to the supervisor as well as do the routine administrative typing and bookkeeping.[29] She also provided her own typewriter! A year later, a new secretary replaced the original; alas, she owned no machine! After prolonged and painful discussion on the question of time payment, a machine was purchased—outright, but secondhand![30] When this perforce was traded in because of age and infirmity in 1918, the Union, as a 'charitable institution' was relieved to receive a discount on the price of a new machine.[31] Yet, in the same year, so parlous was the financial situation, they were unable to afford some much-needed office chairs, as none could be found cheaper than 13/9 each (approx. $1.40). Instead they humbly asked the ASCM, whose rooms they rented at the time, if they might use their chairs 'until such time as [the Union] could arrange to purchase its own'.[32] Yet, somehow, the work was done, and to judge from the well-kept records, well-done.

Of constant concern to the Union in these early days, and indeed for many years to come, was the physical health of the children. The kindergartener—a philanthropist trained as a teacher—knew that one cannot teach, or teach adequately, a hungry child or a cold child; neither can one adequately teach an ailing child. When the Union was formed, Maud Wilson had already been eight years at her Carlton Kindergarten and was daily aware of the chronic ill-health of many children, largely because of inadequate diet which lowered resistance to and lengthened recovery time from the common infectious diseases. At the beginning of 1909 she asked the Union 'to interest itself in the medical inspection of kindergartens'.[33] The immediate response of the council was to ask the Victorian Branch of the Australian Medical Association and the Women's Medical Association to appoint representatives to the Union council.[34] Thus, from the beginning, there were always doctors on the council and usually on the executive as well. Notable among them were Drs Edith Barrett, Helen Sexton, and Constance Ellis. Almost certainly it was at their initiative that in 1912 'pamphlets in connection with skin rashes, diseases of the hair, etc., were made available for distribution among the parents of the children'.[35] The Union hoped 'in this way that these kindergartens may become, in some small measure, centres from which the simple rules of hygiene in connection with child life may be disseminated throughout the neighbourhood'.

This earliest generation of Melbourne women doctors, which included in addition to the women already mentioned, Drs Janet Greig, Margaret McLorinan, and Mary Henderson[36], was, perhaps because of their sex, perhaps because of their association with the Queen Victoria Hospital (also, of course, the result of their sex) especially concerned with the diseases of childhood and most particularly with the conditions which gave rise to disease or poor health, and with ways in which disease could be prevented or mitigated and health improved. Many of them spoke at mothers meetings; some of them carried out medical inspection at kindergartens from time to time; most of them were associated with the development of the baby health centre movement in Melbourne towards the close of World War I, and, seeing the subsequent improvement in the physical condition of babies and their mothers, were eager to continue the good work with toddlers and pre-schoolers. The efforts of, for instance, Edith Barrett at Montague and Hornbrook, Janet Greig at Fitzroy, Mary Henderson at St Kilda, and Grace Vale at Ballarat were supported by the visits of district nurses to kindergartens, usually once a week.[37]

By 1918 it was apparent to the executive that this unsystematic system needed ordering if it were to achieve more than spasmodic success; some kindergartens were well served, others not at all; in some, the honorary doctor attended regularly, in others only when asked.[38] In 1919 local committees were asked to hand over the work of medical inspection to a single medical officer who was to be paid an honorarium by the Union and visit all Union kindergartens in regular sequence.[39] Dr Helen Sexton was the Union's first honorary medical officer; she immediately organized a record system whereby each child had a medical card on which details of height, weight, any physical defects or problems, and dates of examination were permanently recorded.[40] In 1920 Dr Sexton was replaced by Dr Vera Scantlebury-Brown, who held the position till 1934 and received an annual honorarium of £50 paid from the Felton Bequest.[41] Dr Scantlebury-Brown was an ideal choice, being not only closely associated with the baby health centre movement, but also a tireless and visionary worker. Her reports provide an invaluable and also disturbing picture of the children of the first kindergarten generation.

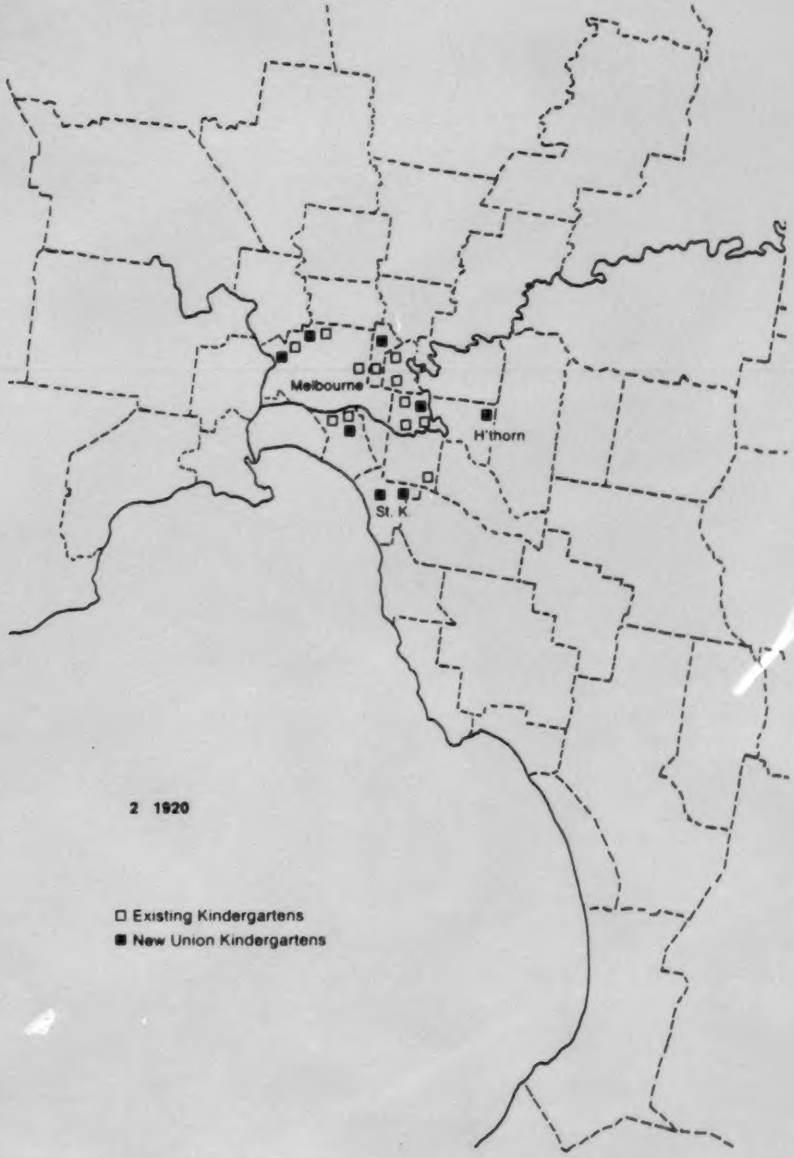
One of the first tangible results of her appointment was the Union's successful appeal to Felton Grimwade and Saunders Ltd to provide tonics and malt extract at greatly reduced prices to the kindergartens.[42] It was, the Union realized, no good diagnosing a pathological condition, if parents or kindergarteners could not provide some treatment for it. In her first report on medical inspection in kindergartens[43], Dr Scantlebury-Brown noted 'the large percentage of children suffering from rickets and from carious teeth, and the lack of nutrition, poor health, and anaemia resulting'. She suggested morning 'handkerchief drill' at which children could be taught how to keep their nasal passages clear, and so reduce the high incidence of adenoidal, tonsil, and ear infections. Her particular concern was to teach parents how best to feed and clothe children, and to observe simple rules of hygiene, thus helping to build up a child's own resistance to disease. Even in kindergartens themselves, supposedly models for the home, she found it necessary to stress that each child should have his own towel, clearly an essential, when skin complaints fostered by dirty living conditions were common.

The appointment of a medical officer and the institution of regular medical inspections mark the beginning of an invaluable community service to preschool children, inaugurated and maintained by the Free Kindergarten Union.

A glance at a map of Melbourne will show that in 1920 as in 1910 free kindergartens were concentrated where one would expect to find them, mainly in inner suburbs, always in depressed areas. Since the listing in chapter 1, new kindergartens had been opened in North Melbourne, Auburn, St Kilda, Ballarat, South Melbourne, West Melbourne, Fitzroy, Richmond, and Balaclava, with a new Richmond kindergarten replacing the former crèche-kindergarten. In a different category came Yooralla for 'physical weaklings' and a kindergarten at the Austin Hospital for children who were long-term patients.

The origins and fortunes of these various kindergartens were as diverse as their aims were similar. The North Melbourne Kindergarten, for instance, whose origins have been traced with some difficulty, had a very chequered career. From 1911 till 1913 it was conducted in 'a schoolroom lent by the authorities of the Methodist Church'.[44] Late in 1913, however, the crèche committee, who were responsible for the kindergarten also, felt the joint task too much for them, and a separate kindergarten committee was formed to carry on a kindergarten in the same building.[45] This venture lasted only till the end of 1914 when, by some means entirely obscure, the Education Department 'acquired the use of the Methodist building' and the kindergarten was temporarily closed.[46] The needs of the area, however, were so apparent that in 1917 it was reopened by the crèche committee in the crèche building.[47]

The kindergarten at Auburn (1912), supported by the Augustine Congregational Church and conducted in its hall in Burwood Road, seems strangely placed in a 'better' suburb, but it catered for real need among families connected with the brick works, market gardening, and the small industries scattered along the railway line.


Melbourne
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2 1920
□ Existing Kindergartens
■ New Union Kindergartens

The Ballarat kindergarten (1912) was the first of the Union's country kindergartens[48] and introduced the Union to the problem of supervising at a distance; the Union's first car was still a long way in the future. Miss Glendinning visited Ballarat in 1918 and was delighted with the enthusiasm displayed and the work being done by the director; but the old hall in which the kindergarten was held, reached by an unmade road, did not please her.[49] The daughter of the local mayor was a voluntary helper there, and persuaded her father to prevail on the council to grant a central block of land for a new kindergarten building. The Union needed no persuading; they made almost unseemly haste to accept the offer 'while Councillor George was still in office'.

The West Melbourne Kindergarten, associated with St James Old Cathedral, was affiliated with the Union for only two years (1912–14), as the Anglican church was at that time establishing its own kindergarten system[50] (see later in this chapter). The Boroondara Kindergarten (1914) in Richmond, unlike many kindergartens of that time, was not associated directly with a church group. It was founded at the instigation of Mrs Alice M. Fawcett, a Union council member, by a local committee of Camberwell citizens to celebrate Camberwell's elevation to the status of a city.[51] The Dame Nellie Melba Kindergarten also in Richmond (1916), replacing the former crèche-kindergarten, took its name from the singer who gave her talent generously to support it and became its patron.[52]

Yooralla (1918) was initiated through the personal vision and efforts of a determined but unbusiness-like lady, Sister Faith, who had worked formerly at the Collingwood Mission Kindergarten. Its story has already been outlined in *The Yooralla Story* by Norman Marshall who, in the opinion of this author, gives insufficient credit to the Union for the part it played in the foundation and early years of this institution for crippled children. At that time, without Union backing, Sister Faith's venture would almost certainly have failed.[53]

The kindergarten at the Austin Hospital (1919) lasted only a few years in that place[54]; in 1926 the Union's work among sick children was transferred to the Children's Hospital under the auspices of the original Austin local committee.

The South Melbourne Kindergarten—not that in Dorcas Street supported by the Methodist Mission, but the kindergarten opened in Bank Street in 1912, transferred to Fitzroy (1918–22) and then returning to Bank Street—was the cause of much concern to the Union. Early in 1912, the FKU secretary received a letter[55] saying that a group of past students of the Loreto Convent intended to start a free kindergarten in connection with the teacher training school which the Loreto sisters had conducted in South Melbourne since 1906. They asked for affiliation with the Union. 'The atmosphere would be Catholic', they said, 'but . . . children of any denomination would be freely admitted.'

This placed the Union in a quandary. Their government grant was received via the Education Department, and under the Act of 1872 education was to be secular. Their concern at this particular stage may seem strange to us, as we have already encountered numerous examples of kindergartens attached to church groups seeking and gaining affiliation. It may have been that these were requests from various groups who just happened to belong to a Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational, or Baptist Church, and the requests did not come from church groups per se. However, in the anti-Catholic climate of the time, it seems more likely that it was the Catholicism rather than the church connection which alarmed the Union. On the advice of M. Hansen, the Union decided not to admit the Loreto Free Kindergarten to affiliation until the Education Department had been consulted. Considering that Frank Tate—even though he later appointed Julia Flynn, not only a Catholic but also a female Catholic, as an inspector in his department—did not like Roman Catholics, and that John Smyth, a dyed-in-the-wool Protestant, was actively hostile to the Catholic Church, it says much for the concern of both men for education, and perhaps also for their desire at that time to accommodate the Union in every possible way, that their reply was in favour of affiliation. Knowing the need for kindergartens and appreciating the value of kindergarten training, they evidently felt that the Department could remain within the letter of the law if they allowed the government grant, once it was passed on to the Union, to be disbursed as the Union saw fit. A note on the departmental file reads:

> Inform that if the Council of the Free Kindergarten Union is satisfied to make a grant in aid of the proposed Kindergarten at Bank St., South Melbourne, this Department will raise no objection.[56]

Mother Patrick, then Superior at Loreto in Albert Park, did not attempt to disguise the fact that some Catholic practices would be observed in their kindergarten.

> The morning prayers will be different in form, also we want stories from the Old and New Testament, e.g. Nativity before Christmas. This I think would be different from your schools. They have morning prayers I know but not the stories. That will make a difference in tone. In every other detail ours is exactly like the other Free Kindergartens.[57]

Mother Patrick went on to say that the past students who were organizing and supporting the kindergarten were interested in 'slum work and crèche work' and had agreed that if Protestant families objected to Catholics visiting them, then 'we can send someone of their own faith'. She was distressed that affiliation might not be possible—hers was, after all, a teaching Order. 'I am disappointed because the girls will mind not being able to have intercourse with other teachers. It would mean so much.' She made it clear, however, that with or without affiliation, the Loreto Kindergarten would start.

> The rooms are bright and airy and there are a number of children waiting to begin . . . [If affiliation is not granted,] we shall have to do the best we can. And I am sure the Free Kindergarten Union will from time to time allow our assistants to visit and observe the work.

Affiliation was granted, and the Loreto Free Kindergarten opened in April 1912 in the supper room of the Emerald Hall in South Melbourne. By 1915 there were 67 children on the roll and all was going well.[58] In the following year, however, the parish notified the Sisters that the hall would shortly be needed for parish purposes, and in 1918 therefore the kindergarten transferred temporarily to Brunswick Street, Fitzroy.[59] This provoked an indignant complaint from the Rev. John Barnaby, Convener of the Home Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church, who held that the Catholics were trespassing on territory where the Presbyterians were already conducting a kindergarten.[60] (This was a new venture, undertaken without benefit of the Union by the Presbyterian Church as part of their Settlement Scheme in Napier Street, Fitzroy.) The Union replied, rather coldly to Dr Barnaby that it was not always possible to check on kindergartens established 'outside the Union', and suggested that the church should in future notify the Union if it proposed to open other kindergartens so that some rationalization of services could be discussed. The Union also stated that Miss Glendinning had inspected the district and enquired carefully there, and learnt that there were many children available for kindergarten who were not yet catered for.

The Union was careful, perhaps more than normally careful in this case, to check standards at the Loreto Kindergarten in its temporary premises; before 16 April 1918, Miss Glendinning had already paid three visits of inspection, and various improvements she had suggested had been promptly carried out.[61] There was a lawn outside 'which provides a good and useful playground'; and 'certain experimental methods in the management of the work and the teaching of singing are proving satisfactory'. Miss Glendinning devoted the major part of her report to the small religious observances carried on in the kindergarten. First stating that she had 'failed to find any teaching being given to which she thought the Union would object', she continued:

> With regard to the children's prayers, these consist of the Lord's Prayer and a very simple little prayer which might be repeated in any kindergarten. Nor have I heard any hymns to which it seemed possible to take exception. I spoke to Miss Fawcett, the Director, some time ago regarding religious instruction and she assured me that no teaching of a Roman character was given. There remains then only the *manner* in which these very short prayers are conducted to which I think exception might be

> taken. Instead of the children remaining standing on the Circle they stand round a picture of a Madonna and Child—similar to those in other kindergartens. Below this picture, as below others in the kindergarten, is a bracket for little flower vases. In addition there are two small candles. After these have been lighted the children kneel and say their little prayers. The candles are then extinguished and the children return quietly to the circle. The atmosphere is very reverent and simple. Before Grace is said, the sign of the Cross is made by the children. In other details the kindergarten in no way differs from the others.

This calm, objective report was hardly likely to have reassured the Rev. Barnaby: not only was his church's new Fitzroy kindergarten, at that time the *only* Presbyterian free kindergarten, in danger, so he believed, from a rival Union kindergarten, but also infant innocence appeared in danger of corruption from popish practices. Miss Glendinning, however, did not allow her judgment to be clouded by any alarm she may have felt; her advice to the Union was given in the knowledge that both Anglican and Presbyterian Churches were now exerting themselves to establish kindergartens in poorer areas, and that the new Catholic Archbishop, Dr Mannix, had also shown an interest in this work. 'Nothing stimulates like opposition', she wrote, 'and I fear we should greatly promote the movement for Roman Catholic kindergartens if Loreto were closed'. But Loreto had stood the test as an educational institution measuring up to the Union's standards, and remained for many years an affiliated kindergarten.

Education Department files in 1916 show for the first time the existence of non-union free kindergartens.[62] The Presbyterian Church had one kindergarten, one director, 18 voluntary helpers, and an average attendance of 40 children, the Fitzroy kindergarten of such concern to Mr Barnaby. The Church of England had three kindergartens, one of them St James', West Melbourne—formerly an FKU affiliate. They claimed three directors, four assistants, and ten voluntary helpers; their average attendance was 200. Thus, whereas an FKU director and assistant were responsible on an average for 41 children, an Anglican director and assistant had to deal with 66 children. The non-union kindergartens did not receive a government grant and were wholly dependent on charity; nor did they come under Union supervision. The Union, even in those early days, may well have feared for the standards it perpetually strove to achieve and to maintain in its own kindergartens. But the story of the relationship of Union to church kindergartens, and the vexed question of religious instruction in Union kindergartens, must await another chapter.

Meanwhile, to return to the days of World War I and thereabouts, the Union faced yet another problem on another flank. This was the problem of the crèche-kindergartens. The Association of Crèches[63] grouped together day-care centres which catered for the needs of mothers, widowed or deserted (possibly single, though that was never suggested!) faced by economic necessity to work for their living. The earliest Melbourne crèche had been opened in Keele Street, Collingwood in 1888, and by the time the Union was founded there were five crèches in inner Melbourne suburbs; another at South Melbourne was added in 1911. Crèches were not educational but child-minding institutions, and they catered for children from babes in arms to school age.

One condition of the 1910 government grant to the Union was that the Union should, where possible, establish kindergartens in or near crèches, where crèche children beyond the baby and toddler stage could obtain some kindergarten training (also, one suspects, to occupy the eager, active youngster penned up in close quarters and so relieve pressure on an inadequate staff). During the period about World War I, there were six crèches associated with the Union. The Prahran Crèche sent its pre-schoolers to the Hornbrook Kindergarten near-by; the North Melbourne Crèche-Kindergarten was closed during part of the war but reopened in 1917; the Richmond Crèche-Kindergarten was replaced in 1915 by the Dame Nellie Melba Kindergarten, but the kindergarten still catered for some of the crèche children. So fortunes fluctuated, but there were always some crèches and many crèche children for the Union to worry about.

One worry was finance. In other kindergartens, the Union was not responsible for the director's salary, only for that of her assistant; at crèche-kindergartens, both salaries were the Union's responsibility. Nor was philanthropic support nearly as forthcoming for the crèche-kindergartens. M.V. Hansen wrote in his 1912 report on kindergartens:

> It is remarkable and very disappointing to find that, while the kindergartens generally are maintaining a very high standard of work and influence, those established in connection with crèches do not reach so high a standard of educational and philanthropic effort as the others, and also fail to command a measure of public support at all comparable with what is accorded to the other kindergartens.[64]

Hansen noted that, whereas in ordinary kindergartens voluntary subscriptions were double the amount received from government, in Crèche-Kindergartens the reverse was true; less than a quarter of their expenditure was covered by voluntary funding—sometimes much less. In the worst case—Richmond crèche-kindergarten—£75 per annum was received annually from government, but in 1912 only £3/11/5 from subscriptions. Hansen's explanation was that ordinary kindergartens 'were launched on a high tide of enthusiasm to meet local needs', but that kindergartens associated with crèches were merely established to meet the condition of the government grant. He urged the Union to try and assist the establishment of strong local committees in crèche-kindergartens, so that the situation might be improved.

Directors were reluctant to work at crèche-kindergartens.[65] As the mothers of some children there were working, a director could not carry out her usual afternoon task of visiting these children's homes and thus try to spread the influence of the kindergarten into the family, which she had been taught to regard as one of her priorities. Nor were the educational intentions of the directors and assistants met by the suggestion of one member of council that they should devote 'three afternoons a week to helping keep the children happy'. Happiness might well be a result of kindergarten sessions for children, but it was not the purpose for which a kindergarten teacher was trained! The best directors therefore tended to shy away from crèche-kindergartens, and thus widen the gulf between the two types of kindergarten.

Another problem which arose was that crèche children were not regular in their attendance at kindergarten. Not all mothers worked every day; when they were at home they tended to keep their children with them, from motives of either affection or laziness, and the children's kindergarten attendance was thus spasmodic, reducing the value presumed to lie in regular kindergarten training. At Richmond Crèche-Kindergarten, for instance, it was noted in 1915 that the number of children attending had fallen during the year 'owing, no doubt, to the lack of work, so that mothers have not brought their children to the crèche'.[66] This problem of irregular attendance was discussed by the council in 1917, and was succinctly expressed by Mrs a'Beckett:

> If the kindergarten reserved, say, 20 places for crèche children and for 2 or 3 days a week only 10 attended, it kept out others in the neighbourhood who could attend regularly and also increased difficulties for the Director and her helpers with regard to their work and the standard to be maintained. This had always been a difficulty and was still unresolved.[67]

Nevertheless, the Union was bound by the terms of its grant, without which its work could not continue, to co-operate in many suburbs with crèches, and Union and directors alike had to deal as best they could with the situation. And this, though difficult and unsatisfactory in many ways, could nevertheless be seen as philanthropic work of the highest order, as the South Melbourne Mission Kindergarten noted in its 1914 report when children from the local crèche were first being received there:

> These children are of the very type which we, as a kindergarten, are most anxious to help, and though they make the work much more difficult by their irregular attendance, we welcome them gladly, and are delighted to notice many signs of improvement in their manners and general behaviour.[68]

These children were taken back to the crèche for lunch 'freshly washed and ready for their meal'. Similarly, the poor conditions at the City Crèche-Kindergarten in 1919 did not induce the Union to close it down, because the need it met was seen as greater than an insistence on unrealizable standards.[69]

Even if irregular attendance, lack of local committee co-operation, and inadequate or insufficient equipment resulting from shortage of funds made nonsense of the educational claims of kindergarteners, even if some directors felt they were prostituting their professional training as ancillaries of a mere child-minding service—and an inferior one at that—yet, to the philanthropist, the care and 'rescue' of a child was all important, and the most educationally minded kindergartener remained also a philanthropist.

Chapter 4

The College between the Wars

From 1917 till 1965 all training of kindergarten teachers in Victoria was undertaken by the Free Kindergarten Union. The problems involved in this undertaking were legion: a qualified staff for lecturing and for the supervision of practical work; quarters for them to teach in; the attraction of students of sufficient education to enable them to meet the standards of university graduates like Mrs a'Beckett and Miss Henderson, Mrs Olga Warren (née Parker), later a lecturer in philosophy at the University of Melbourne and Miss Dorothy Ross, Headmistress of MCEGGS (1939–55); the retention of these students, when qualified, in sufficent numbers to staff the union kindergartens; and, the perennial problem, funds to pay for all this. The Union was, in fact, caught on the horns of a dilemma; its own ideals and high aspirations had been the root cause of the split with the Education Department, yet the Union did not really have the finance to set up and maintain a training college which could adequately produce, year by year, kindergarteners of the quality it demanded. The more money it put into training—and no part of the government grant could be used for this—the less it had available directly for kindergartens, for the children who were the Union's initial concern, the less support it could give to local committees who must inevitably become discouraged, and, most importantly, the less it could pay its assistants. This meant a high wastage rate of trained teachers who were needed to maintain the Union's standards; it meant that outside organizations like church kindergartens and independent schools were reaping the benefit where the Union sowed the investment.

The Union embarked on its two-year training course in 1917 on a wave of enthusiasm. Numbers of students in the early years are uncertain, the figures given being conflicting, but probably 12 or 15 attended each year under Miss Glendinning (1917–21).[1] Of these, roughly half were in first and half in second year; their fees were £10/10/- per annum, considerably higher than the charge by the Education Department to its sub-primary students. They attended lectures at the Union's rented rooms in Clyde House.[2] Lecturers included some distinguished names; for example, Mrs a'Beckett herself for physiology, Mrs Warren for English, Miss Ross for Nature Study. They were paid a 'fee', described as 'purely nominal'[3], clearly giving their services to a cause they had very much at heart.

Till 1921 there were three training kindergartens[4] where the directors, all very experienced teachers, supervised their practical work—Montague under Miss Dorothy Bethune; Burnley, Miss Nora Semmens; and Carlton, Miss Mary Lush. These training directors also lectured the students assigned to them but in their own kindergartens, one or two afternoons a week, thus sparing the girls, who came uniformly from the southern and eastern suburbs, another long trip into the small, poky lecture rooms in the city. Indeed, the journeys of students and kindergarteners, daily by public transport, from home to city or to kindergarten and back, are a saga in themselves, and all fares were paid out of their own pockets; so too was the cost of the big, bib-type aprons which they wore on duty.

When students completed their course they could be appointed as assistants to any free kindergarten—appointed by the local committee, but recommended and approved by the Union's education committee. Their salaries at this time, as they had been ten years before, were £40 per annum, so it is not surprising that they frequently left the Union and found employment as kindergarten or sub-primary teachers elsewhere. They were registered as kindergarten and sub-primary teachers by the Council of Public Instruction, and could therefore work in non-union kindergartens or in the kindergarten and infant classes of independent schools.

The FKU executive, aware that its low salaries put it at a disadvantage vis-à-vis other pre-school employers, discussed the salary question exhaustively at a conference in April 1920.[5] The treasurer, after referring to the increase in the cost of living during and since World War I, and to the successful action of some trade unions in securing higher wages, said:

> It was generally agreed that when a Company could not meet the demands of the workers it closed down, and unless the Union could get the money, it must close down. Can we be doing a fair thing when we train girls to high ideals, when we are not paying sufficient to the teachers to enable them to live?

He moved that £50 per annum with a £10 annual bonus should be the minimum for an assistant in her first two years, and thereafter £60 plus the bonus. This motion was carried unanimously. Interestingly, its seconder observed that though low salaries had sometimes been regarded as justifiable because 'many of the girls had good homes and did not need the money', the Union should not pay a salary below a living wage 'as most girls liked to be self-supporting'. So were old mores changing.

Directors were paid by local committees; by 1922 their salaries ranged from £90 to (occasionally) £150 per annum for training directors, and the annual report noted ruefully that 'these rates are still too low to compete with outside schools for trained kindergarteners'.[6]

Given the high wastage rate, the Union needed to train more kindergarteners, but this was not possible in the cramped quarters at Clyde House. As Miss Glendinning noted in her 1920 report:

> [The two rooms in Collins Street were] excellent for central offices, but quite inadequate as classrooms. Lectures for first and second year groups must often be held simultaneously, which, in our present quarters, means that there is no office for the supervisor, and no room for meetings or interviews. We could not carry on with this limited accommodation were it not for the ready co-operation and disregard of personal convenience on the part of the clerical secretary.[7]

Many members of the executive, and Miss Glendinning, were convinced that if only larger premises were available, students would flock to the training college. They did not foresee any difficulty in placing an increasing number of diplomates in positions in Union kindergartens, but the problem of retaining them in these posts on low salaries could not be ignored. The convener of the education committee faced it squarely in 1920 when she spoke to the executive on the subject.[8] She stressed the heavy burden imposed by the training course on FKU finances, and queried whether the Union could ethically spend, on training, money donated specifically for children and their kindergartens. She saw clearly that no matter how many students the Union trained, staff would not stay at Union kindergartens indefinitely at the present low salaries. She even had the temerity to follow this line of thought through to its logical conclusion and suggest that perhaps the Union should give up training. This would release a great deal of money to be available for salaries and kindergartens; it would also take a great deal of work off the shoulders of the hard-pressed supervisor, who was clearly in need of an assistant, whom the Union could not afford to employ! This heretical suggestion was, needless to say, anathema to the executive; it was not for this that they had so recently broken with the Education Department. Their response was to involve themselves deeper in a financial morass by seeking larger premises, as Mrs a'Beckett specifically suggested, 'an old house in a good neighbourhood', which could be used as FKU headquarters, as a training college, and as a hostel to enable country girls to live in Melbourne and train as kindergarteners. It was hoped that this institution might be supported, or partly so, by proceeds of a paying kindergarten to be opened nearby, for the children of families in the 'good neighbourhood'.

This was not a new suggestion, having been first mooted at an FKU council meeting in 1912[9]; it was also a favourite dream of Miss Glendinning, who wrote in 1920, 'I am convinced that somewhere in Melbourne is just the house we want and a generous owner wanting to give it to us'.[10] A year later she wrote:

> We are still hampered in our work . . . by absolutely inadequate accommodation and as yet there is no prospect of obtaining a hostel which is such a very necessary adjunct to our work. We have so many applications from the country for trained kindergarten teachers who will never be available until we draw trainees from country districts.[11]

She appealed for help from country families to assist in providing a residential hostel.

The Union at this point desperately needed more students, not merely to replace those lost after training because of low salaries, but also to make the training course financially viable; fees from 12 or even 20 students were insufficient; an intake of 40 could be dealt with by the same number of staff. Increased income was also needed to support the work in kindergartens and in particular to raise salaries and so reduce the wastage rate. To cope with more students, larger premises for classes were essential; to attract country students among these, residential accommodation was also essential. In short, it seemed to the executive that the only solution was considerable investment—a real gambler's throw.[12]

The year 1921, when the total number of students in training was 19, marked the turning point. In April that year, the revered Lady Spencer, after a period of inactivity through ill-health, retired as president, to be replaced for a strenuous term of 18 years by Ada Mary a'Beckett. Several suggestions for more suitable accommodation had proved abortive: a row of cottages in Carlton to be adapted[13]; a 14-room house in La Trobe Street[14]; boarding country students in private homes[15]; but finally in September 1921, Mooroolbeek, home of Sir Frank Madden in Kew came up for sale (not for 'gift' as Miss Glendinning had optimistically dreamed!).[16] The mansion contained 22 rooms, four bathrooms, a dairy, and a wood shed; the neighbourhood was undoubtedly 'good'; the price was £3500. The Brennan Estate (a charitable trust) provided the initial deposit, and over £2500 was given in immediate donations, the Union's first patron, Lady Northcote, and the current governor's wife, Lady Forster, contributing generously. The Union at last had its larger premises—offices, training college, and hostel all under one spacious and gracious roof. Miss Glendinning was offered and accepted the position of principal, though she can scarcely have believed the optimistic assurance that this would involve 'no extra work'.[17]

Immediately, as the executive had hoped, the number of students in training soared; between 1922 and 1930 it did not fall below 30, while in the peak year of 1928 45 students were enrolled.[18] The Union was careful, when advertising the opening of the new college[19], to insert advertisements in the larger country newspapers; church papers also carried the advertisements, as the philanthropic role of the kindergartener was still a very real inducement to many trainees, as well as to the generous public. Three additional kindergartens—Boroondara, Collingwood Mission and St Kilda—immediately became training kindergartens to deal with the extra numbers.[20]

In 1923 fees were raised to £7/7/- a term or £22/10/- a year[21]—that is, they more than doubled in five years. Boarding fees for students in residence were initially £60 per annum[22], raised in 1924 to £63. These charges, high compared with the salaries students could expect to earn when qualified, helped finance the Kindergarten Training College (KTC) and pay small fees to lecturers. They also served, together with the entry qualifications and the embryonic stage of state secondary education, to determine the sort of girls who became kindergarteners. Someone, after all, had to pay the fees, which were beyond the pocket of a worker on a weekly wage. Even the Nora Semmens scholarship, instituted by the directors association of the Union in 1925[23], was tenable only in a student's second year, given on the results of her first year's work. It was thus available only to someone already within the ranks. Again, even the least qualified student had to have passed six Intermediate subjects, including English. At that time the school leaving age was 14, and most state schools did not reach above eighth grade where a merit certificate could be obtained. Intermediate, which we would now call fourth form or year 10, required a further two years at school. The source of college students, then, was the independent schools, and the link between these schools and the college was reinforced by the use made of some of the schools for students doing their subprimary training[24]—an essential if they were to obtain their registration.

Each year till 1938 the annual report listed and thanked the independent schools which had taken KTC students for their practical training. Schools in the Kew-Hawthorn area were naturally prominent—Ruyton, MLC, and Carey, as well as Tintern, Lauriston, Fintona, and St Marks a little further away; still

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more distant from the College were Rosbercon, Firbank, and Caulfield Grammar; only Lowther Hall, which for a few years in the early 1930s accepted KTC students, was on the other side of Melbourne. Once again, the social class and place of origin of KTC students and therefore of free kindergarteners are apparent.

Inevitably the college students and thus the Union's staff were all drawn from the 'comfortable' class—not necessarily, or even usually, wealthy by any means, but of such an economic position as to be able to afford first, the independent school and then, college fees for another two years. They all came, therefore, from a relatively cultured background; they all read books, and most played the piano and appreciated the arts; their values and standards were similar; even their addresses show them to have been drawn from a semicircle from Brighton to Balwyn. This homogeneity served to reinforce a sense of distinctness between themselves and the families with whom they worked in an inner circle round from St Kilda to Port Melbourne. There was a feeling of 'us' and 'them'; the former went forth to help the latter who were, somehow, 'different'.

As always, country girls remained at a disadvantage. In most cases their families needed higher incomes to provide, first, an education at a private boarding school, and later not only kindergarten training, but residence at Mooroolbeek.

The move to Mooroolbeek coincided with the advent of a new supervisor to replace Jessie Glendinning. This was Miss (later Dr) Mary Gutteridge, who succeeded Miss Glendinning under rather inauspicious circumstances, but who remained as supervisor and principal till 1936, and to whom the great success and expansion of the Union's training in those years is undoubtedly due.[25]

Miss Glendinning was an Englishwoman, and though those who knew her recall her as being rather condescending about all things Australian, she appears to have been impressed by the Union and its work, both philanthropic and educational, and in her first years here, at least, to have laboured happily in its vineyard. We have noticed already her careful, detailed report on the transplanted Loreto Kindergarten and her forthright condemnation of Rokeby Street; the same report also had a considered statement on the new Yooralla Kindergarten. A little later we find her visiting Ballarat, and throughout her five years as supervisor her reports to the education committee show care and concern. Besides supervising the individual kindergartens, her duties included running the new training course which began in the year of her arrival. She was responsible for lecturing to both first and second years in the basic subjects of Kindergarten Principles and Management, Gifts and Occupations, and of Child Welfare, and would doubtless be required to set and mark examination papers as well. All this she did on a salary of £200 per annum, till 1921 when it was raised to £275.[26]

Towards the end of 1921, Miss Glendinning's duties were increased with the purchase of Mooroolbeek; she was on the sub-committee which planned essential alterations to convert the old house into a college[27]; and early 1922 found her, wearing her principal's hat, busily ordering books on the history of education for the library there.[28] She had already applied for a year's leave of absence, as she had been in poor health for some time; this was granted from March 1922.[29] Her departure coincided with the arrival in Melbourne of a former pupil of Miss Isabel Henderson at Faireleight in East St Kilda, who had later taken a kindergarten course at the Froebel Institute, Roehampton, England. This was Mary Gutteridge, and the Union, doubtless aware of her abilities and qualifications from Miss Henderson, was eager to employ her. Already in December 1921[30], they had offered her the position of director of their planned new paying kindergarten near Mooroolbeek; she was also asked to lecture to students; her salary was to be £150 per annum with residence. All this—a great deal when one considers that few, possibly only one, of the executive were acquainted with Miss Gutteridge—had been arranged by letter and cable. Miss Gutteridge agreed to the arrangements, turning down another proffered job in New Zealand to work with the Union. On her arrival in Melbourne late in February 1922, she was asked to act as supervisor of the Union and principal of the college during Miss Glendinning's absence.[31] The salary was to be £300 per annum. This offer also Miss Gutteridge accepted, on the understanding that she was guaranteed a position with the Union on Miss Glendinning's return. The executive agreed to this, but stipulated that division of duties between her and Miss Glendinning must await the latter's return.

So far, all was plain sailing. Mary Gutteridge took up her duties immediately and with great enthusiasm and competence. Miss Glendinning was given three months salary and a presentation, but she did not at once leave Australia—she may well have remained a little longer to introduce her deputy to the work. Her last report to the executive is dated April 1922 (when officially she was on leave) and reads in part:

> In conclusion may I thank members of the Education committee, especially Mrs Wrigley, for the great help they have given me during the past five years. During my leave of absence I shall often remember the work going on here and . . . kind wishes and thoughts . . . will continually be with you all.[32]

Before she left, some time between mid-April and mid-May, she was interviewed, at the request of the executive, by Mrs a'Beckett, the president, concerning 'certain difficulties' which, it was alleged, had arisen between Miss

Glendinning and her directors, several local committees, and the executive over the past three years. The 'certain difficulties' and alleged dissatisfaction are hard to reconcile with a letter of appreciation spontaneously sent to the supervisor from the executive in mid-1920 'thanking her for her excellent work during the year'[33] or with the letter of congratulation sent her in October of the same year on 'the satisfactory nature of the training report'.[34]

Mrs a'Beckett and several members of the executive stated that these alleged problems had been to some incalculable extent the result of Miss Glendinning's chronic ill-health; that this might well improve; but that unless she was sensible of the problems, the Union would be better off without her. One needs to remember also that by this time, mid-1922, the Union had a taste of what a younger, capable, and vigorous supervisor and principal could undertake. The annual report of mid-1922 referred to Miss Gutteridge in glowing terms:

> . . . a trained Kindergartener with a quite exceptional understanding of students as well as kindergarten children, [who] has carried through since May the heavy duties connected with the principalship of the College and the supervision of the Kindergartens. She only returned from Europe . . . this year, and her wonderful experiences during the war and her opportunities of organising kindergartens and training students in both England and France during the past three years have enabled her to present many helpful and stimulating ideas, not only to the students, but to the directors.[35]

Some few members of the executive, headed by Miss Gilman-Jones, headmistress of the MCEGGS, who had already tried unsuccessfully to have a full year's salary paid to Miss Glendinning during her leave, now suspected that the president and her supporters were attempting to get rid of the supervisor in her absence. A full-scale extraordinary meeting of the FKU council was therefore called on 30 August 1922 to discuss (explicitly) 'the allocating the work next year between Miss Glendinning and Miss Gutteridge'[36]; implicitly it was to decide whether Miss Glendinning would return to the Union's service at all.

Mrs a'Beckett explained to this meeting that she had interviewed Miss Glendinning before she sailed and attempted to discuss with her the various 'difficulties' of the past few years; she had done this at the request of the executive, privately, so that discussion could be frank and 'unminuted'—thus putting the barrier of no documentation in the way both of this historian and of the council of 1922; however, this may not have been the intention. According to Mrs a'Beckett, Miss Glendinning had asserted that she 'was in no way responsible for what had occurred at various times' and that the executive was greatly exaggerating. Mrs a'Beckett said that Miss Glendinning did not take kindly to criticism; the executive had raised these 'difficulties' with her on several occasions, but she had always denied either the problems or her responsibility for them. After Miss Glendinning had sailed, Mrs a'Beckett had heard from friends that she did not intend to return; Mrs Wrigley, however, read a letter from Miss Glendinning stating that she 'had every intention of returning'. Miss Gilman-Jones asked if specific examples of the 'difficulties' could be given; as if on cue, various members of local committees responded with a string of imprecise instances, while at top level even Lady Spencer stated that she had found the supervisor 'difficult to work with'. Unsuitable appointments and lack of a good working relationship with directors and with committees made up the main burden of the song; even council members who had no specific instances to cite expressed 'every confidence in the executive'. It was generally agreed that the 'atmosphere' was not 'harmonious' under Miss Glendinning, that she lacked 'tact', in particular that she was apparently unable to allow for the evident effects of her own ill-health on her 'memory and judgement'. It was because the executive, the directors, and the local committees had been aware of the difficulties under which Miss Glendinning worked that they had not made more fuss earlier.

Miss Gilman-Jones opposed this view. The Union, she said, was now seeking an excuse to get rid of Miss Glendinning, although no sense of dissatisfaction had arisen till after the arrival of Miss Gutteridge. Mrs a'Beckett denied this and was warmly supported by a big majority of council (no repetition here of the 1912 tied vote on the issue of Mrs Deakin's resignation). The question to be decided, Mrs a'Beckett said, was whether the Union in its straitened financial circumstances could afford to employ two senior officers at £300 per annum each. In fact, the meeting had been called to decide no such thing, but to divide the senior administrative duties of the Union between two employees. The grounds of argument had been very subtly shifted; having presented the undeniable fact that the Union could not employ both women on such handsome salaries, Mrs a'Beckett, instead of asking, 'What, then, shall we do with Miss Gutteridge whose services we wish to retain?' asked instead, 'How can we find a face-saving means of easing out Miss Glendinning?'.

One cannot cavil at Mrs a'Beckett's statement that the Union would 'be very unwise and lacking in foresight if they did not retain Miss Gutteridge's services'—the next decade proved the truth of this; but the high moral tone of warning to the council to bear in mind their very 'heavy responsibility and . . . duty to the Kindergarten movement in the state' accords ill with what appears from available sources to have been shabby treatment of a faithful, if ailing, employee. No one doubts now, and few doubted then, the motives of those who replaced Miss Glendinning with Miss Gutteridge; clearly Mary

Gutteridge was the superior for the position, as the story of her 15 years with the Union clearly shows. But if one goes a step further and asks whether ends ever justify means, then one needs to pause and consider.

The results of this extraordinary meeting were several. Firstly, Miss Glendinning was sent six months salary from 1 March 1922 and obligingly responded by resigning as from 1 March 1923.[37] Secondly, Mary Gutteridge became, from the start of 1923, what in fact she had been already in all but name, supervisor and principal. Thirdly, Miss Gilman-Jones, a model of probity and rectitude, shrewd enough to comprehend the sleight of hand by which the dismissal had been brought about, and head of an organization which was not short of money, resigned immediately from both the FKU council and its education committee; she also withdrew the support of her school from the Union, informing her assembled pupils that 'she could not support an institution . . . which behaved as badly as the FKU'. She gave no details, but assured the girls that 'the most underhand dealings had been going on'. This considerable blow to finances and to prestige was shortly afterwards reversed by the direct intervention of Archbishop Lees[38], though MCEGGS did not again accept college students for their sub-primary training. Fourthly, the position of Ada Mary a'Beckett, then new in her role as FKU president, was confirmed and heartily endorsed by both council and executive; from then on her word was virtually law. It was well for the Union that not only her ability, but her drive, dedication, and judgment were equal to the confidence reposed in her and to the great responsibilities she shouldered.

Mary Gutteridge, too, shouldered great responsibilities. As principal of the college she had charge of all kindergarten teacher training, and as supervisor of the Union she had oversight of the 24, presently 25, Union kindergartens—three of them, by this time, outside Melbourne. In addition, being in residence at Mooroolbeek, she was inevitably involved in its domestic ups and downs, in the social life of the students in residence, and in the brief career of the little Mooroolbeek kindergarten.

This venture, begun early in 1922, was short-lived.[39] It started with 18 local children aged from 4 to 8, the intention being to use it as a practising school for the sub-primary as well as the kindergarten work. Within a year the age limit had been lowered to admit three-year-olds. Fees for the under-sixes were £2/12/6 a term, and for the over-sixes £3/3/-. The little kindergarten/school received state registration. In its four years existence it had three directors. The Union hoped by this venture to gain a small income, to provide kindergarten experience for children in an area where there was no call for a free kindergarten and, as a by-product, possibly to interest the children's parents as future supporters of the Union. Miss Gutteridge saw it as an ideal place to demonstrate true Froebelian principles:

> The chief aim of the school is to stress the individual ambition and effort in each child, and thus develop personality. To this purpose the teacher's role is to encourage and to explain and, at the same time to make herself less and less necessary to the child. He, finding his independence, glories in his ability to do and to achieve.

The high hopes were dashed. The number of children never rose above 20, thus it was always too small to serve usefully for practice and demonstration; fees were insufficient even to cover expenses; already by May 1923 there was a debit balance of £10/6/9. The kindergarten struggled on through 1925, and then on the advice of the education committee was closed. There is a lesson to be learnt from this brief, sad story: the idea of education for the pre-school child was not yet commonly accepted among middle-class parents. A free kindergarten for the poor was one thing, still widely regarded, despite the Union's efforts, as a basically philanthropic venture with a little education thrown in; a kindergarten as an educational institution where one would pay fees—a pre-*school*, in fact—was quite another matter. The more conventional Kew parents kept their pre-schoolers at home; the more advanced sent them to the kindergarten sections of the local independent schools, where they would be taught, quite possibly, by KTC diplomates assisted by KTC students. Not till the 1940s did Victoria's middle-class generally accept as normal, desirable, even essential, education for their pre-school children. Like Mrs Champlin even earlier, Miss Gutteridge was a long way ahead of public opinion. Public opinion itself still required educating!

The Mooroolbeek hostel suffered perpetually from the Union's chronic shortage of funds. A lovely home, converted for use as a boarding and teaching institution in a pleasant residential suburb, and inhabited by girls from good homes and women of education and high ideals, it was in many ways, as Mrs Boreham has shown, similar to many contemporary independent girls schools. The material poverty was evident at every turn, the cheese-paring and the making-do; one sympathizes with the first housekeeper-matrons, Miss Lockhart, Mrs Fulton, and Miss Oxenbold, in their efforts to make ends meet. Mrs Fulton's regular monthly reports—for example, this one shortly before her resignation—show us the concern for every tiny item of expenditure and the thrifty efforts made, such as the keeping of chooks, to keep domestic bills as low as possible:

> Owing to the talked of shortage of coal, I ordered another ton and a half during the holidays, and that is the reason our fuel bill is so high. I have also to order more wood today.

> Attached is the financial statement showing the position at the end of first term. I have taken into consideration the accounts, amounting to £41/13/8, which are to be passed for payment today. The debit balance was £182/4/6, and fees, tea money, etc. outstanding amount to £32/4/-, leaving a net debit balance of £150/0/6 . . . I have shown against these figures the corresponding figures for last year, in red ink. The milk and vegetable bills are very much heavier, I think chiefly on account of the higher prices ruling on account of the drought. The grocer's bill is heavier, but in this is included two cases of soap, which will last till next year, and a chest of tea which is not nearly finished. I have also made more jam than I did last year, as we ran out before the jam season started last year.
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> With reference to my resignation which is attached, I would like to say that I shall leave the house as well stocked as possible in the way of jam, marmalade, pickles etc., and will give as much time as I can to the garden during this term. I have made green tomato pickle this week, and have two more melons to make up; as soon as the marmalade oranges come in I will start on those . . .
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> The carpet in my bedroom was washed and cleaned during the holidays and is most satisfactory. I think Miss Gutteridge's will have to be done in the same way during the next holidays.[40]

Mrs Fulton's successor adopted the practice of shopping at the Victoria Market for fruit and vegetables in an effort to keep expenses down[41]; an executive member volunteered to drive her there and back each week. Such was the co-operation between employer and employee in the interests of economy, so essential if the hostel were to continue to function. Many of the furnishings and comforts of the house were given by executive and council members, even a vacuum cleaner being donated in this way in 1926.[42] The students, by a series of fund-raising activities, paid for their own tennis court; they also helped as need arose with painting shelves and cupboards, cleaning silver, washing dishes, and various domestic chores.[43] The resident students provided a nucleus round which, at Mooroolbeek, a very strong bond of affection and shared aims—perhaps shared inconveniences also!—developed among kindergarten trainees in the interwar years; the strength of this bond is nowhere better illustrated than in the formation of a Past Students Association in 1922[44] and in the association's unremitting and successful exertions to found and maintain a holiday home for needy kindergarten children.

The only regret Miss Gutteridge and the house committee of Mooroolbeek felt about the hostel was that it received too few students. Sixteen was the minimum number required[45], merely to cover expenses; yet in 1927 there were only nine and in 1928 only ten. The depression years found some fees in arrears as hard-hit families were unable to keep up payments; some were permitted to pay in small instalments, some were allowed reduced fees.[46] At the end of 1934, so few were the prospective enrolments for 1935, the possibility of closing the hostel was seriously discussed; instead an arrangement was made whereby for that year the hostel paid no rent to the Union.[47] None of this, of course, helped the Union's financial position which, ironically, had been a contributory reason for the opening of the hostel in the first place. Instead the hostel, though of undoubted value in providing accommodation for a few—not hordes of!—country students, and for fostering a college sense of unity and co-operation, remained for many years a small but constant drain on already inadequate funds.

It seems unlikely, however, that Mary Gutteridge allowed this state of affairs to worry her unduly. She was primarily an academic and an educator; her essential task, as she saw it, was the training of kindergarten teachers through whom, she believed, influence of incalculable benefit could be made on the young child. To her, all other concerns were secondary. Mary Gutteridge agreed wholeheartedly with Froebel, whom she quoted, 'The problem of the world is an educational one'.[48] In the years between the wars, years of high faith in the League of Nations, fading into quiet despair as its ideals were seen as unattainable, her job, as she saw it, was to train those who would guide the world's future citizens. 'The eyes of the world', she wrote in 1926, 'are turned to Educators to solve the world's problems and more particularly to those who have the care of the little child, because it is clearly realised that in the early years the character of each is made or marred'.[49]

With a clear aim thus before her, Mary Gutteridge set to work. Firstly, after 1923, the one year 'governess course' was abandoned[50]; from now on, one either was or was not a trained kindergartener, and to commence training one must have passed six fourth form subjects.[51] It appears, however, that her educational aims and those of the education committee and lecturing staff were not always compatible with the need of the college for increased numbers of students, especially of country students who alone, as residents, could make not only the college, but also the hostel, economically viable. At the end of 1924, the executive authorized for publicity purposes an article on kindergarten training which was published in 146 country newspapers. This resulted in many enquiries from country girls, but the education committee reporting to council noted sadly that 'unfortunately many of the girls did not have the necessary educational qualifications'.[52] This was probably the direct cause of a change in the necessary prerequisites in 1925, so that five fourth form subjects were sufficient provided a sixth subject could be completed during a student's first year.[53] Significantly, though the financial statements for both 1924 and 1925 show deficits of over £200 in the training account, this had fallen to only £23 for the 18 months January 1926 to June 1927.[54] But, though the lowering of the entry qualification may have had a satisfactory financial result, intellectual debits and credits cannot be so simply assessed.

The next college innovation was the introduction of a third year's training before a Kindergarten Teacher's Certificate would be awarded. This was heralded by Miss Gutteridge in her 1924 report[55] where she wrote that the proposed third year would 'ensure the practical carrying out of the theoretical knowledge gained during the two previous years'. In view of the lowering of entry prerequisites and the parlous financial state of the College, one may be excused for questioning the purity of the educational motive behind the implementation of this third year of training in 1926. Not only did it ensure more income from fees, while the salary bill remained virtually unchanged, it also attempted to halt, at least temporarily, the loss to the Union of college-trained kindergarteners, which was, by this time, alarming.

This device of the third year's training was implicitly a bonding scheme which withheld a certificate from students till at least one year's service as a lowly-paid assistant had been given in a Union kindergarten. The Union could not, of course, prevent successful students from obtaining their state registration as sub-primary teachers at the end of their second year. Indeed, if the temporary retention of staff, despite low salaries, was the Union's intention—and this can only be surmised—then the scheme may have been self-defeating; students could leave with registration, obtain outside employment in independent schools or church kindergartens, and be forever lost to the Union. Figures available do not enable us to find out if this, in fact, did happen.

Acceptance of this unpalatable but understandable hypothesis need not detract from our view of Miss Gutteridge as a single-minded educator. Her aim to train kindergarteners more fully may merely have coincided with the Union's aim to retain staff. Miss Gutteridge's determination to raise educational standards is supported by the statement appearing for the first time in the 1928 annual report that, though six Intermediate subjects (no reference to five, plus one later) qualify for admission to the College, Leaving Certificate—that is, fifth form or Year 11—is 'preferred'.[56] There is evidence that the educational qualifications of students did, in fact, improve. In 1933, for instance, out of a first-year intake of 18, only three possessed a bare Intermediate Certificate. Nine students had passed their Leaving Certificate, and five had obtained some Leaving Honours—form VI.[57]

The quality of the staff remained high. Mrs Frances Thorn, whose sister Catherine Remmington was principal of the Associated Teachers Training Institute, was now giving the History of Education lectures, and Mrs Frances Derham the Art classes. Miss Gutteridge herself lectured in the basic method subjects in all years. In 1926 a most useful asset to kindergarteners and kindergarten trainees was provided with the publication of a book by Mary Lush, *Progressive Kindergarten Methods.*[58] The beginnings of a new approach in kindergarten method can be clearly seen in this book: the trend is away from group work to emphasis on the individual child. It was commended to all directors and assistants and used extensively, not to say reverently, by students. All proceeds from sales were donated by Miss Lush to the Union—a small but useful sum in royalties which continued for many years.

Miss Gutteridge's teaching was additional to her work as supervisor. With her full support, both to assist her and to raise the educational image of the college and bring it further into the main stream of education, a College Advisory Council was set up in 1927.[59] Initially, it was not proposed that the principal herself should be a member—and one recalls the attitude to Mrs Champlin years before—but should attend only when invited. This insulting and stupid plan was, however, amended almost at once. In October 1926, the executive had accepted a Provisional Constitution for the College which listed membership of the Advisory Council. Beside 'the Principal of the College' is inserted 'when invited to attend', but this qualifying clause does not appear in the first printed list of Council members in the 1927 annual report. The council was finally made up of eight representatives of the Union, including the principal and the conveners of both education and house committees, and one representative each of the University of Melbourne, the Medical Women's Association, the Women Graduates Association and the Secondary Teachers Association. There was also to be one 'business man'—a recognition of the economic plight of the College—and a 'publicity officer'—a very modern-sounding title.

This last member, Miss R.G. Harris, was a paid employee, earning the princely sum of £100 per annum, but unfortunately she stayed only 18 months, as the Union was unable to afford her salary.[60] In this short stay she seems to have been fully and usefully occupied, and her brief reports on her broadcasts, newspaper articles and pictures, and her visits to schools make fascinating reading. For instance, this one, early in 1928:

> I have sent several paragraphs to the papers and attended to the reporters at the Official Opening. At his request I also interviewed Mr Greig Smith of the Charity Organisation Society, who desired some information with regard to the FKU for a pamphlet he publishes. I asked him to stress the care we take from the health point of view. Next month I propose visiting the various schools offering to take groups of schoolgirls on a definite morning to visit some of the Kindergartens. I think this would create more interest than just addressing the pupils. I feel very disappointed that we have only eleven students this year. I did hope that my work of the last six months might have brought forth more fruit but I am constantly up against the question of salary. People will not consider studying hard for two and three years to eventually get £100 a year or less, even though it is in the cause of charity. Girls

> who could afford it do not want to do the study necessary for becoming a trained Kindergartener.[61]

How unerringly this clear-sighted young contemporary outlines many of the points already made in this chapter; how unselfconsciously she uses the phrase 'cause of charity'.

Miss Harris seems to have been the first person associated with the Union to use the relatively new medium of wireless, giving two talks on 3LO when 'fortunately for me both nights were clear for broadcasting and I had several messages from country districts afterwards'. The suggestion of broadcasting part of a kindergarten session was hers—though the object was not educational but intended to arouse interest among adults and would-be students in the work of the Union. On her departure, the burden of public relations settled inevitably on Miss Gutteridge who in 1930 gave three talks on 3LO 'to induce girls to take the course next year'.[62]

But this is to anticipate. With the introduction of the third year—which she certainly saw as an educational opportunity, whatever may have been its intention—Mary Gutteridge began to find that she had more work than she could satisfactorily cope with, and asked for an assistant supervisor.[63] This is another indication that her interest lay with education, rather than with field work, or she would surely have asked for an assistant principal. Her request was not granted and she had to be satisfied with a £50 increase in salary.[64] She was also given in 1927 £3 a month allowance for expenses incurred running her brother's car when on Union business[65]; the purchase of a vehicle of its own was well beyond the Union's pocket. She also asked for and received permission for a year's overseas study leave for 1928.

As acting principal and supervisor, the Union appointed Miss Dorothy Rosner from the Brisbane Kindergarten Training College. The Union paid Miss Gutteridge six months salary, on condition that if she did not return to the Union this money was to be refunded. After an additional year's leave had been given[66], however, she did return, in triumph, from the USA, having made use of a Rockefeller Fellowship in Child Study to obtain a B.Sc. from Columbia University.

Miss Rosner, holding the fort at home while the shadows of the great depression lengthened and the hostel was forced to take 'two paying guests' to fill empty beds[67], was cheered by the gift of a car to the Union from an anonymous donor.[68] The vehicle cost £215 and, according to Miss Rosner, 'made the work of supervising considerably easier and less tiring and has saved my strength and energies for other branches of the really arduous work entailed in the duties of Supervisor and Principal'.[69] In 1930 her duties were eased by Miss Gutteridge's return; Miss Gutteridge was now to be principal only, in which capacity she supervised only the training kindergartens, at a salary of £300 per annum plus £100 living-out-of-college allowance. Miss Rosner, in residence, became vice-principal and supervisor of non-training kindergartens, also on a salary of £300. Dorothy Rosner applied what must have been considerable business acumen to the administration of the hostel, where the expense of a matron was no longer incurred. Within 12 months she had turned a deficit of £153 into a credit balance of £168.[70]

The two women appear to have worked well together till the partnership was broken by Miss Rosner's illness in mid-1935. The illness proved fatal and she died of cancer in May 1936, sincerely mourned by all in the Union and at the college. A Rosner Memorial Fund was used to buy books for the college library.[71]

The return of Miss Gutteridge early in 1930 was the signal for a new educational advance at the college—an advance apparently unsullied by financial motives, a genuine attempt to bring kindergarten training in Victoria and therefore, indirectly, work in kindergartens into line with the latest overseas developments in educational thinking. For some years, the interest of those concerned with pre-school children had been shifting to the 'nursery years', to children beyond the 'toddler' stage, yet below the kindergarten age of 3½ to 4 years. Strongly influenced by her studies in the USA and by her contact earlier with Margaret and Rachel MacMillan, pioneers of the English nursery school movement, Miss Gutteridge now proposed that the college should offer a one-year, postgraduate nursery school course, geared to the handling and needs of younger children.[72] This suggestion was implemented.

An arrangement was made with the Mothercraft Training Homes whereby nursery school students could attend either the Presbyterian Babies Home or the Foundling Hospital for an intensive three-months course on the care of small children.[73] This link of two major organizations concerned with very small children was to prove valuable to both, and is an example of the pooling of skills and scanty resources in a common cause.

Mary Gutteridge's dream of a special, independent nursery school to serve as a model and demonstration centre for this new branch of pre-school work in Victoria had reluctantly to be abandoned. With a bank overdraft of £2000 in 1930, and with subscriptions from the public and donations from charitable trusts falling sharply, no new major expenditure could be undertaken. Miss Gutteridge and the Union had to make-do with what was available.[74] Many kindergartens as we know had long been associated with crèches, and had possessed 'baby rooms' where little pre-schoolers were placed, usually under the care of an assistant. The Collingwood Kindergarten in Keele Street, formerly the Collingwood Crèche-Kindergarten, was selected as the first nursery school to be associated with the Union, and the nursery school students were to do their practical training there. A self-contained upper storey was added to the kindergarten building and equipped to meet the needs of two- to three-year-olds; it included a sleeping area. Miss Gutteridge herself acted as director for the first year, and two students in the new course were her assistants. Shortly afterwards the Collingwood Mission Free Kindergarten and the Lady Forster at Port Melbourne opened nursery schools in their 'baby rooms'. Grants from the Carnegie Corporation made these developments possible.[75]

The inauguration of the nursery school course was not the only educational development at the college in the 1930s. The whole emphasis on pre-school teacher training, both in its method and in its philosophy, was shifting increasingly from the older stress on group activities to stress on the development of the individual child. This trend, embryonically apparent some years before in *Progressive Kindergarten Methods*, was heartily endorsed by Miss Gutteridge and impressed by her on her students in the years after her return to Melbourne. The traditional 'circle', the group games like 'drop the hankie', the highly directed handwork like 'cutting out and sticking on' changed to much more individual activity and to group work for smaller numbers, say six or seven. This was only practically possible, of course, where the staff:child ratio was high, and this meant mainly in the training kindergartens. It also depended on a director being flexible enough, sometimes after many years acceptance of older methods and a more directive philosophy, to adapt herself to change. Students from the 1930s onwards accepted the new methods and the non-directive philosophy as natural, and as they moved on into staff positions so the new ways spread through the kindergartens.

In an effort to hasten the spread of the new gospel, Miss Gutteridge, in 1930, started a refresher and research course for trained kindergarteners—who wished to catch up on the latest developments in the field of pre-school studies—to conduct lectures, train students, and undertake their own research. A grant of £100 to the newly-established Australian Council for Educational Research from the Carnegie Corporation made possible the KTC's first research program[76]—into the attention span of young children. The results of this work were published by the ACER. The fruits of Mary Gutteridge's own research overseas and experience were also published on her return in a little book, *The Story of an Australian Nursery School*[77], which gives not only a brief account of the Keele Street nursery school but also of the new philosophy of early childhood which lay behind the nursery school movement.

It says much for Mary Gutteridge's determination and powers of persuasion that new courses and even some slight research work should have been not only undertaken but also maintained during the depression period.

Chapter 5
Kindergartens between the Wars

In the 20 years between the wars, the number of kindergartens affiliated with the Free Kindergarten Union increased from 20 to 30: that is, the rate of expansion was much slower than it had been in the Union's first ten years.[1] The purpose of this chapter is to consider the reasons for the change in the rate of expansion and to survey the kindergarten scene in Victoria between 1918 and 1939.

The Union depended on its local committees. Without a local committee which showed itself active and able to provide financial support, no kindergarten was founded with the consent of, or later affiliated with, the Union. The responsibility of local committees for premises, equipment, and director's salary was basic; beyond this, most committees attempted to provide to a varying degree for material necessities like cheap clothing for needy families, a glass of milk and a biscuit or, increasingly, a hot mid-day meal. The Union helped—mostly with the assistant's salary, meagre though it was, and with the provision of regular medical and, later, dental inspection by professionals to whom the Union paid a small honorarium; often with some gift like a piano to a new kindergarten; regularly in the distribution among affiliated kindergartens of the government grant and of monies given by the big charitable trusts.

This general outline of the position vis-à-vis Union and committees remained and remains the same, but in the 20 years between the wars the balance between the two altered. Local committees found it increasingly difficult to carry on; interested philanthropists found committees harder to form and keep together;

the Union found itself time and again called on to step into the breach with additional financial assistance. In 1919, local committees provided nearly 63 per cent of the overall running expenses of kindergartens, the Union only 37 per cent; by 1936, the contribution of the committees had fallen to 52 per cent while that of the Union had risen to 48 per cent. This important shift in balance is fundamental to any discussion of the Union and its kindergartens in the inter-war period.[2]

Another new element in the kindergarten scene was the development of non-affiliated kindergartens, especially by the churches. By 1939 there were seven of these under the auspices of the Church of England, seven run for the Welfare of Youth Department by the Kindergarten Council of the Presbyterian Church, and eleven by the Catholic Board of Education. The basis of these kindergartens was essentially philanthropic, and their standards varied greatly: Church of England kindergartens, for instance, were little more than debased, old-fashioned Sunday schools held in church halls on weekdays, with largely unqualified 'directors', primitive conditions, little, if any, attempt at education and much hymn singing. The most charitable description of them would be of crowded and inferior child-minding centres. (This situation improved dramatically during and after World War II under the leadership of Miss Win Griffiths, a Union trained kindergartener, appointed by the newly-established Church of England Free Kindergarten Council.) The Presbyterian church assumed more responsibility for its kindergartens and put some money into them; with its traditional emphasis on education at all levels, it ensured that these kindergartens did not neglect the educational aspect of the work; their directors and assistants were trained teachers, usually with an Infant Teachers Certificate from the Education Department. Roman Catholic kindergartens were few for so large a denomination; that church found its finances fully extended in maintaining its primary school system.

We noted in Chapter 3 the distress of the Presbyterian minister in charge of Home Missions at the temporary transfer of the Union's Loreto Kindergarten to Fitzroy in 1917. By 1922, the overlapping of kindergartens in some inner suburbs like Fitzroy and Richmond was worrying the Union[3], and a conference was called in October with Church of England, Presbyterian, and Roman Catholic representatives to try and rationalize the situation.[4] This seems to have been relatively successful, as the four bodies agreed to consult one another if any one of them proposed opening a new kindergarten. Thus, in 1927, when the Union's Dame Nellie Melba Kindergarten in Richmond was proposing to rebuild, the local committee acquired a block of land in Hutchings Street. Consultation with the Presbyterian supervisor led the Nellie Melba committee to dispose of this site and purchase another in Goodwood Street nearer their original kindergarten and further from the existing Presbyterian kindergarten.[5] On the other side, the Church of England notified the Union in 1924 of their intention to open St Luke's kindergarten in South Melbourne[6], and the Presbyetrian church did likewise concerning their kindergartens in South Melbourne[7] in 1926 and Kensington[8] in 1929. The three churches also agreed with the Union to co-operate in stimulating public interest in kindergarten work and in the raising of funds. The annual Rose Day appeal for children's charities was shared by all free kindergartens, Union and non-union, and proceeds were distributed among them. The Rose Day collections were for many years a great boost to kindergarten funds; in 1920, for instance, the appeal's first year, the Union received £1521 for distribution among the various kindergartens whose committees had taken an active part in collecting donations.

When World War I ended, both philanthropically and educationally minded kindergarten supporters saw great possibilities for development opening ahead of them; energies, for four years harnessed to the war effort, could now be redirected to the children and families of the poorer districts. The problems and difficulties lying ahead were not then apparent. Thus, in the four years to 1922, five new kindergartens were opened.

The first of these did not require expenditure on bricks and mortar; it was the Austin Hospital Free Kindergarten, inspired by the example of the new Yooralla Kindergarten and started by the enthusiastic efforts of Mrs D.L. Stirling for long-term child patients at the Austin, suffering mainly from tubercular, spinal, or heart conditions. For the seven years of its existence, this kindergarten brought variety and interest into the lives of many children who learnt to appreciate books and good music and who excelled at many handcrafts; it was noted also that in several cases physical health responded favourably to mental stimulation. This little kindergarten—its average number was about 20 children—was closed in 1925 when, with the expansion of orthopaedic work at the Children's Hospital, most young children with long-term conditions were accommodated there.[9] Mrs Stirling and her committee switched their efforts to the Children's Hospital where a new—or perhaps one should say transferred—kindergarten was opened in the surgical wards in 1926.[10] The work at the Children's Hospital developed further in the next ten years, firstly with a nursery school in 1934[11] and then, in 1936, with another kindergarten in Ward 13.[12] This was the 'special' ward for children suffering from venereal diseases, and before the Union would agree to sending a kindergartener there they had to be most carefully assured that she ran no risk of infection. The hospital paid the director who was appointed on the advice of the Union's education committee.

In Prahran, where the Hornbrook Kindergarten had already been operating for a decade, a group of women who had been engaged in local Red Cross work during the war noted the poverty of the more northerly part of the district and obtained the use of the Baptist Church Sunday school hall to open a new kindergarten in 1920. On a wave of rapidly declining patriotism, they managed to secure the support of the officers of the warship 'Renown' which had carried the Prince of Wales on his recent visit to Australia; they received the gift of a large Union Jack and, in recognition of this, named their kindergarten 'Renown'.

1920 also saw the opening of two kindergartens in Geelong to join Ballarat in the select group of country kindergartens. One was in West Geelong and the other, Chilwell, at Newtown; in the first year, approximately 30 children attended each kindergarten.[13] Their distance from Melbourne, even though they were on a direct train-line, must have added considerably to the time-consuming work of the supervisor. To reduce her travelling time and fatigue, an arrangement was made in 1922 whereby the directors and assistants of country kindergartens used to spend an occasional week in Melbourne, observing in various kindergartens and keeping abreast of developments in kindergarten work.[14]

During this immediate post-war period a third kindergarten was opened in South Melbourne, this time in Park Street, later to be named the 'Lillian Cannam' after its first president.[15] So great was the need for a kindergarten in the area that, after opening in February 1922 with 12 children, numbers rose to 50 in less than a fortnight and a waiting list had to be started. The local committee was enthusiastic and saw their work as distinctly philanthropic: 'The district is very poor and very rough', they wrote in their first report, 'There is great room for Mission work here'.

Not all districts were as fortunate in their committees. The North Melbourne Crèche-Kindergarten was closed—temporarily, it was hoped—in 1919[16] and the Fitzroy Crèche-Kindergarten only remained open with the aid of direct financial assistance from Union funds.[17]

The Union itself was obliged to rationalize its scanty resources of money and staff. A kindergarten was clearly needed in the Port Melbourne area, but how was a local committee to be got together to finance the project and where was an experienced director to be found? The answer was to close St James Kindergarten in Balaclava, some of whose small enrolment of children—only 29 on average attended—could be taken at the St Kilda-Balaclava Kindergarten. The local committee, thus released from one responsibility, turned its energies to Port Melbourne where the former St James director started her kindergarten in 1925 in the Salvation Army Hall[18]; in the first year the average attendance was 49. This kindergarten was later named the Lady Forster Kindergarten after the Governor's wife who gave it strong support and was present at its opening.

The 'temporary' closure of the North Melbourne Kindergarten continued and the Union was conscious of the fact—glaringly obvious if one glances at a map—that there was *no* Union kindergarten between the city and Williamstown.[19] The inner semi-circle, together with the three country kindergartens, still contained the Union's kindergartens, but it did not contain all Melbourne's poverty or all Melbourne's children. The Union was thus delighted to grant affiliation to the Madeleine Barat Free Kindergarten in Footscray.[20] This was opened in February 1927 by a committee of 'old girls' from the Sacred Heart Convent; its improbable location was the Salvation Army Hall, and its average attendance was 44. However, this kindergarten committee disaffiliated in 1928 as the committee wished to work in connection with the Roman Catholic Church. The Union attempted to carry on by organizing another committee, but they were unsuccessful. Footscray itself, not surprisingly, could not provide a committee of its own—a group of 50 local women was asked to tea at Mooroolbeek, the intention being to arouse their interest and enthusiasm and to offer advice and assistance; only five attended! Charitable women on the other side of Melbourne were fully occupied; besides, need in Footscray was a long way away, not so apparent as that in Fitzroy and Carlton. In August 1928, the kindergarten closed.

This sad episode marks a watershed in FKU affairs. It seems that from this time on—and one must remember that the end of 1928 saw the beginning of the economic plunge into the worst of the depression years—a local committee alone was not sufficient to start, equip, and maintain a free kindergarten. Other assistance was necessary. The nature of this other assistance had first been glimpsed before the failure at Footscray. This was in 1924 when the first free kindergarten in the northern suburbs was opened in Brunswick.[21] The Brunswick kindergarten committee was initiated by the local municipal council. It was the Brunswick Council which called a meeting to elicit and stimulate interest in a kindergarten, and which gave a regular grant of £100 per annum towards expenses. After only six weeks the number of children attending averaged 55. The Brunswick committee was 'local' in the sense that no other was at that time; its members were resident in the same district as the kindergarten and they received the active support of their local council.

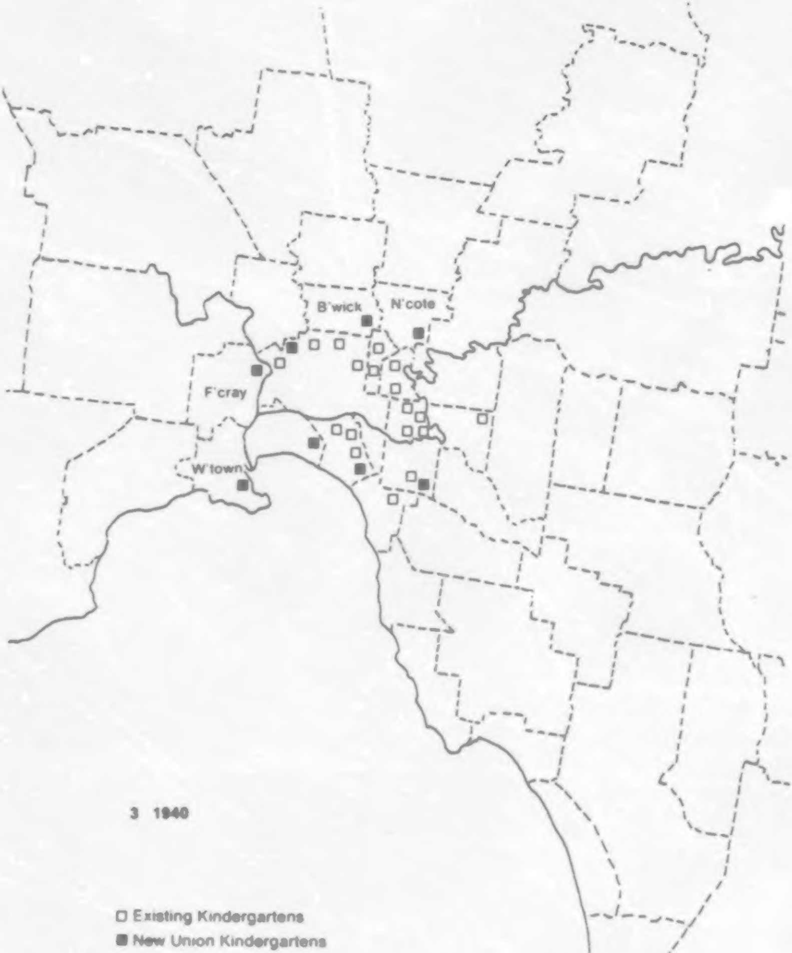
Brunswick seems to have been the first council to give financial assistance, though other local councils had earlier expressed interest. The two Geelong kindergartens, for instance, had the Mayoress as president; and later, at Port Melbourne, the municipality played a part in the opening of the Lady Forster Kindergarten.

Local councils, of course, were not wealthy organizations—no one, it seems, was wealthy in the years between the wars—but their ideas on how to spend their money were expanding. The growth of the baby health centre movement, coupled with the spread of kindergartens—church and private as well as Union—and with the Union's constant propaganda in newspapers and magazines, was gradually awakening people's minds to the value of kindergartens. Thus it was that Footscray gained a kindergarten, very shortly after the Union's failure there—a kindergarten built by the local council in conjunction with a Baby Health and Community Centre in 1930; this kindergarten was affiliated with the Union in 1932.[22] In 1934, the Annie Dennis Free Kindergarten in Northcote, named for the wife of the Mayor of Northcote was affiliated.[23] In 1935 a similar development took place in Williamstown whose kindergarten was also granted affiliation.[24] Very slowly, the inner circle was opening out.

Just before World War II, the executive noted this municipal interest with pleasure.[25] South Melbourne, where there were three Union kindergartens, was making a small annual grant to each; the Port Melbourne council was holding a ball in aid of kindergarten funds and forming a kindergarten auxiliary; Brunswick, which had been forced to reduce its grant to £50 during the depression, was now planning to restore it to £100 per annum.

The single voice which was most influential in rousing municipal bodies to awareness of the part they might play in the care of the pre-school child was that of Dr John Dale, Medical Officer of Health to the City of Melbourne from 1927 to 1949.[26] Dale, as a medical officer in a large, basically professional, business and industrial city, was not concerned by any means solely with kindergartens, but he was concerned very broadly with the quality of the lives that people in his area could hope to live. He was concerned with families—with mothers, their babies, their children, their housing, and their open space. At many points, therefore, his activities intersected with those of the Union. One of his first moves was to take over, from the Union's hard-pressed medical officer, the job of medical inspection at kindergartens in the city—that is, at Carlton and City Crèche-Kindergartens.[27] From 1929 this was carried out by one of his officers, Dr Hilda Kincaid, making it possible for the Union's medical officer to give more attention to the remaining kindergartens.

As early as June 1930, Dale suggested at a meeting of the KTC Advisory Council—of which he was a member, 1929–49—that municipalities where kindergartens already existed should be approached for funds[28] and be made aware by the Union of their social, educational, and economic value. Dale also interested himself in baby health centres in the Melbourne area; one of his aims was a kindergarten in Abbotsford Street, North Melbourne, associated with the North Melbourne Baby Health Centre.[29] (The 'temporary' closure of


B'wick
N'cote
F'cray
W'town
3 1940
□ Existing Kindergartens
■ New Union Kindergartens

the union kindergarten in the district in 1919 had proved permanent.) This plan nearly succeeded in 1928, though the Union then, strangely it seems at first sight, did not fully support his scheme. The Union's view was that, though the district was 'desperately poor' with as 'bad slums there as in any part of Melbourne', yet the area was not readily accessible to children and was, in any case, already served by Anglican, Presbyterian, and Catholic kindergartens. They would have preferred to concentrate on districts where there were waiting lists of children wanting to attend kindergarten. In the event, the financial stringency of the next few years led to the North Melbourne scheme being abandoned in 1930[30] and not reconsidered till 1939.[31] In April of that year the Melbourne City Council through Dale offered to buy a block of land in North Melbourne for £1850 and then spend £4000 on a kindergarten building and £1000 on equipment. The Union was to help organize a local committee and, when the kindergarten was started, was to be responsible for half the maintenance and running costs. This plan was gladly adopted. A local committee, largely of university graduates, was formed under Mrs J.D.G. Medley, wife of the Vice-Chancellor, and the new kindergarten, 'Lady Huntingfield' after the current Governor's wife, was opened in 1940.

Almost coincidentally with the opening of Lady Huntingfield, Yooralla withdrew from affiliation with the Union, quite appropriately, as many of its children were not of kindergarten age, and its interests coincided better with those of other organizations aimed at assisting the physically handicapped. The Union was relieved to note that the disaffiliation would reduce their burden by £110 a year, and by considerable anxiety.[32]

Despite the difficulties of local committees, however, and their declining ability to contribute to kindergarten funds in their former proportion, it would not be true to imagine their members sitting back in defeatist attitudes while the tides of depression beat upon them. What most local committees were concerned about during these years was the improvement of their kindergarten accommodation, facilities, and equipment. Depression or no, quality of education began to loom higher on their scale of values. This is one reason why the 20 kindergartens of 1919 had catered for an average of 1416 children, but the 30 of 1939 for only slightly more, 1439.[33] In 1921 the voluntary helpers report had stated that 'it is still possible for one teacher to be in charge of fifty children and her assistant in charge of twenty-five 'babies' (three-year-olds)[34]; gradually the Union enforced its policy of a ratio of 30:1.

There is no doubt that physical conditions in many kindergartens needed improving and that committees were aware of this. The church hall was no longer seen as a desirable refuge, but rather as a temporary shelter pending a proper, suitable kindergarten building. Conditions such as those described by

Miss Glendinning in 1917 became unacceptable. The education committee reported in 1923 that the supervisor 'in visiting kindergartens is paying close attention to the sanitary arrangements which in many cases are in a very bad and unhygienic condition, and to the formation of grass plots and gardens for the children's playground'.[35] Conditions in the City Kindergarten were described as 'a disgrace' in 1925[36]; shortly its 'sewerage defects' were 'attended to'[37] but in 1934 they were again in a 'disgraceful condition'[38]; this time they were 'rebuilt'[39]—even if this achievement did take 14 months. City Kindergarten, always a Cinderella, was undoubtedly exceptionally bad; Miss Rosner had even favoured closing it down completely in 1932[40]; but other kindergartens, too, left much to be desired, and their committees worked hard to improve them.

Thus, in the immediate post-war period, a proper kindergarten building was erected for Renown in Prahran[41]; there were additions to the Marie Kirk in Richmond[42], a new kindergarten building at Boroondara[43] and at St Kilda-Balaclava.[44] In the country, too, all three kindergartens were provided with new or enlarged premises between 1922 and 1933.[45] Deepening depression saw metropolitan committees still maintaining their efforts, though the returns were not always commensurate. Hornbrook was 'enlarged and renovated' in 1929, the same year that the Brunswick committee altered and added to a large property bought for them by the city council; the new Lady Forster Kindergarten, opened in the previous year, now had its playground and garden laid out by the Port Melbourne council; in 1930, the Nellie Melba Kindergarten opened a new kindergarten building; and by the end of the year Keele Street, Collingwood had added a second storey to the building for use as a nursery school.[46]

Efforts continued during the 1930s; Lillian Cannam erected a proper kindergarten building on land leased by the South Melbourne Council at a nominal rental for 30 years[47]; Collingwood Mission opened a new building in 1932.[48] The Loreto Kindergarten in South Melbourne secured a £3000 government grant from the Unemployment Relief Fund for a new building in 1936.[49] Renown opened a new nursery school addition in 1937, and even the Lady Northcote Kindergarten in the heart of some of Melbourne's darkest slums began in that year 'an up-to-date, commodious building'.[50] Finally, as noted before, the new Lady Huntingfield Kindergarten was opened, but, as also noted, the Melbourne City Council was heavily involved in this project which neither Union nor local committee could have undertaken unaided.

All this went on despite the really desperate financial straits of some committees. At Fitzroy Mission, by June 1931, things were so bad that the Union had itself to carry on the kindergarten until a new committee could be formed;

incredibly only a month elapsed before such a committee was assembled.[51] The Nellie Melba Kindergarten found itself £400 in debt by April 1932 and asked the Union to guarantee the debt[52]; this the Union could not undertake to do. Hornbrook asked for less—merely £5 for paint in July 1932—but the Union 'could not assist at present'.[53] In the same month they had agreed to pay the salary of a second assistant at South Melbourne Mission, and their resources were already stretched to breaking point. At the end of the year Loreto wrote saying that 'owing to finance' their kindergarten would not be reopening in 1933[54]; somehow the executive, the director, and Mother Patrick arranged matters and the kindergarten continued.

Yet standards—not today's, but high judged against those existing in some non-Union kindergartens and against contemporary expectations—were not allowed to slip too far. In Moonee Ponds, with the support of the Essendon Council, a kindergarten was opened in 1938.[55] Though its committee remained in close touch with the FKU executive, it was not affiliated before the war because its conditions 'were not up to Union standard'. The local committee was urged to accept only a small number of children because there was only one room, no kitchen or bathroom, limited play space and the lavatories were 'difficult to supervise'. The Union repeatedly stressed that better premises were essential; the local committee tried—even suggesting a disused 'theatre building'; in May 1940 the Union was still urging a proper kindergarten building and this kindergarten, Coronation, was still unaffiliated. The kindergarten at Williamstown, on the other hand, had been affiliated since 1935 and the Union was not happy about it. Late in 1939 two members of the education committee visited and 'found the whole situation entirely unsatisfactory. The building was most inadequate and the children were not getting proper guidance'.[56] The Union strove to maintain standards, but sometimes it seems that the sheer need for some sort of shelter and some oversight, almost regardless of quality, forced a reduction in certain kindergartens.

The efforts of local committees, which imply time available for a great many voluntary activities to raise money, like bazaars and jumble sales, bridge parties and balls, as well as income to support personally and by example the local kindergarten, indicate that the sort of women, and the few men, on the committees remained as they had been in the Union's early years. But the depression was no respecter of persons (though it respected some perhaps more than others) and the FKU executive realized that few people in the 1930s had bottomless purses. In April 1935, when vacancies on the executive were to be filled,

> it was felt that owing to the exacting nature of the work and the constant calls on

> members' pockets, it was hardly fair to expect members of local committees to bear the financial burden of the Union as well as of their own Kindergarten.[57]

This was undoubtedly a realistic comment and, though some local committee members remained on the executive, attempts were made to leave them free to concentrate their efforts on their own local kindergartens.

Speaking at the first meeting of the newly-formed Australian Association of Pre-School Child Development in September 1939, Mrs Alice Creswick who had just succeeded Mrs a'Beckett as President of the Union, put the position of local committees in a nut-shell:

> In nearly every case the only money the local committees can actually count on is the Union's grant for their First Assistant's salary—an average of £100 per Kindergarten—and a small (in most cases very small) municipal grant. The local committees live, worrying as to how even the dreadfully low salaries of their staff are to be paid, having very little energy left to give to the really important administrative work of their various kindergartens and nursery schools. I would here like to pay a tribute to local committee members . . . for the valiant way they have struggled on and on, year after year, always hoping for increased government and municipal help to relieve their heavy burden. I think many of us feel we have for so many years organised jumble sales, bridge parties, sales of work, etc., that we could almost be called professional organisers! Many local committees have asked the Union for financial help; but the Union is not able to meet its own commitments, and so cannot be expected to do more.[58]

No wonder that the contribution of committees to overall finance declined proportionately; but funds were needed and had to come from somewhere. They came from the annual government grant, from the contributions of the big charitable trusts, and from the efforts of the FKU executive. All these sources were severely curtailed by the depression. Thus, the government grant, which was increased to £2000 in 1924 and to ;2500 from July 1929, was reduced to £2250 in 1930 and to only £1800 in 1931; not till 1935 did the Union receive £2250 and in 1938 £2500 again.[59]

A similar reduction was apparent in trust contributions. As early as July 1929, the Edward Wilson trustees informed the Union[60] that they had 'so many calls to relieve distress' that they could not make a contribution to the Union as usual. Pleas from the Union softened this blow; £750 was in fact received instead of the usual £2000; in 1930 this was further reduced to £500. Other trusts similarly reduced their giving: the Alfred Felton Trust, for instance, from £750 (1928) to £700 (1929) to £670 (1930) and to only £300 in 1931. Even more dramatic was the drop in the J.R. McPherson Trust contribution from £1000 (1928) to £150 (1929) to £100 (1930) and to only £50 in 1931. There were many other trusts and funds; all showed a similar reduction.[61]

Kindergarten funds were also habitually augmented by several regular fund-raising activities, such as Rose Day and Wattle Day: in 1928, funds received from these two sources were £1730 and £721 respectively; in 1930, they were £739 and £554; in 1933, £555 and £274.

The Union was used to running on an overdraft; successive treasurers urged its reduction; various token attempts were made, like finding an honorary auditor to save the annual £20 fee[62] and dispensing with the publicity officer in 1928 to save £100 per annum[63]; but compared with the single largest item of expense—assistants' salaries, £2730 in 1930—these cuts were mere bagatelles. There was, in fact, little excess to be pruned; what the executive set itself to do was to raise more funds, and the mere listing of their multifarious efforts makes remarkable reading. In mid-1928, for instance, the lease of the tearooms at the old Public Gallery and Museum was open for tender. The executive seriously considered tendering, employing a paid cook-manageress, using voluntary helpers as waitresses and dishwashers, and thus bolstering FKU funds.[64] This hare-brained scheme was dropped. The executive concentrated for a time on trying to find new subscribers. Also, incredible though this may seem, salaries were reduced.

By 1931 the full gravity of the situation was such that it was set forth at length in the annual report, customarily a very bland document.

> We are facing, perhaps, the most serious and most difficult year in the history of the Free Kindergarten Union. For several years, the work has progressed wonderfully—delightful buildings have been erected and equipped so that kindergartners [sic] have been enabled to work more efficiently, and thus have been encouraged; the development of the children, physically, mentally and morally, has been most marked. The enthusiasm and efficiency of Miss Gutteridge and Miss Rosner have inspired all our workers, and Directors and Committees alike have been anxious to keep abreast of all the new developments for the welfare of the child. And now at this juncture we are faced with a seriously depleted income, because of the enforced £700 reduction of the Government Grant and the very much curtailed allocations from Trusts. To balance the budget, expenditure must be reduced if funds are not available. The executive and administrative side of the work has always been done at minimum cost, because of so much voluntary service, rigid office economies and gifts in kind. Salaries are so low that we cannot make reductions without imposing hardships. Only our three Union officers and 13 out of our 26 Directors and 44 Assistants, receive over £150 a year, and at the beginning of 1931, our Principal, Supervisor and Assistant Secretary each generously accepted a reduction of nearly 17 per cent, while some of our Directors have also assisted by accepting a lowered salary. How far can we go with these reductions? It is a very big thing to ask the Directors and Assistants to manage on a 10 per cent reduction to enable us to save about £500. Are we to reduce the number of children attending our Kindergartens at this time when, more than ever, children need the help of the Kindergarten, or are we even to go so far as to close the Kindergartens? These would, of course, mean a saving, because maintenance charges would be less and, in many Kindergartens,

> no Assistant would be required and, were the Kindergartens closed entirely, of course, no income would be needed at all. But are we doing right to deprive the child of the benefits which we could give so easily had we our normal income, and are we to add to the great army of unemployed our trained kindergartners?'[65]

In this extreme situation, the executive had doubtless been comforted by their treasurer, Mr L.D. Millar, who confided that 'though as treasurer he deplored the state of our finances . . . as Bank Manager he thought it improbable that the Bank would take any action regarding our overdraft'.[66] At this time the overdraft was £1873; two years later it had risen to nearly £2500.

The executive put their best feet forward: in 1932, £2475 was made by a monster exhibition of antiques.[67] Some of this money was used to reduce the overdraft, and some to paying off the debt on the Mooroolbeek building; both these actions, of course, reduced the interest bill. In future, it was agreed, money raised was to be used for 'local kindergartens which are finding it more and more difficult each year to make their income and expenditure meet'.[68] Lady Spencer, still a vice-president of the Union, compiled and sold a cookery book for FKU funds[69]; a Pioneers Ball was held in the State's centenary year, 1934, and a profit of £800 was made.[70] But the bank balance, which was miraculously £533 in credit in 1933, was quickly again in trouble, the debit balance being £1088 in February 1937; by the end of that year it had increased to £1600, and Mrs a'Beckett told Council that FKU finances were 'drifting back at the rate of £600 a year'.[71] In the 1938 annual report she stated:

> The finances of the Union are in a serious state; no extension can be contemplated at the present time, and the little children all over Victoria are being prevented from participating in the happy, joyous life of the Free Kindergarten, to establish physical, mental and emotional health.[72]

In desperation, the Union asked for a donation of £10 each from all its kindergartens, though well-knowing what the local financial position was. Admirably, most local committees found their £10.[73] But those members of local committees who were also on the executive—and there were still a few of them, like Miss Lush from Carlton, Mrs Rita May Harris from Collingwood Mission, and Mrs Creswick from Lady Northcote—warned the executive that local committees could do no more, and that, if the Union found itself unable to pay assistants' salaries, as seemed possible, then kindergarten committees would be forced either to close kindergartens or to limit entries.[74] Such was the economic position of the Union when World War II broke out in September 1939, the same month in which Mrs Creswick succinctly explained the Union's financial plight to the AAPSCD.

> The Victorian Kindergarten Union's principal source of income is a grant from the

> Victorian State Government of £2500. It is in receipt also of various grants from various Trusts; but these are nearly always earmarked for a special purpose, [f] or the Union is only the channel for allocation of these grants to the various Kindergarten Committees. Usually these grants, when divided up among our thirty-two Kindergartens, only amount to a guinea or two each. Then there are some annual subscribers, and from time to time the Executive is able to enlist the sympathy of some organisation, such as a shipping company, and a ball or other entertainment is held in aid of the funds of the Union. But our income is so far below our expenditure that, if it were not for special donations, we should not be able to carry on at all. As it is, we are very nearly overdrawn—to our limit of £2000, and our financial advisers are asking us to go slow this year. The Union helps the local committees by paying the First Assistant in each Kindergarten. This is supposed to come out of the Government grant, but in 1938, £430/16/8 had to be transferred from other accounts to meet the deficiency. The Union also pays the salaries of Principal of the College, Assistant Secretary, Supervisor, Relieving Director, Social Service Worker and now, with the increased work brought about by our increased activities, a typiste has been added to our staff. All these officials are necessary; all of them paid minimum salaries, but it sometimes seems as if the effort of raising the necessary money is going to be more than we can manage.[75]

The FKU executive had good cause to feel despondent, as Australia again committed itself to war—a war which no one, this time, supposed would be 'over by Christmas'. How much time and money now being expended by generous, hard-working citizens on civilian charities would henceforth be diverted from kindergartens as people turned their minds inevitably towards the war effort?

Yet they could not doubt the value of the past 30 years' work. The social and economic condition of Melbourne's poor families for the whole of that period, and most especially in the severe depression of the late twenties and early to mid-thirties, justified every effort made and every penny spent to alleviate distress. On the educational side, too, the idea was gradually gaining acceptance of the kindergarten as an institution for *all* children, not merely as an adjunct to a philanthropic institution for the children of the poor. Yet, in retrospect, it appears that inevitably, in the inter-war years, the attention of active kindergarteners was focused on the philanthropic rather than on the educational side of their work; that the educational advances of Mary Gutteridge and her two immediate American successors, were seminal rather than actual, except in some isolated instances—such as the new nursery schools and in the sub-primary sections of some independent schools; and that the ideas then advocated would not be widely appreciated by the general public or by the parents of pre-school children for some years to come.

Consider the paper read by Dr Kingsley Norris to the first AAPSCD conference in 1939. After dealing briefly with the incidence of malnutrition and rickets in children, Norris proceeded to quote the first report of Victoria's Housing Investigation and Slum Abolition Board, produced late in 1937:

> The Board records its horror and amazement at the deplorable conditions under which these thousands of men, women and children are compelled to exist. Hundreds of houses contained small rooms, low and water-stained ceilings, damp and decaying walls, leaking roofs and rotten floors. Many are badly lighted, rat and vermin infested, and without proper ventilation. Inadequate sunlight, dampness and lack of drainage render these shelters which are not worthy of the name of dwelling, veritable plague spots, and heavy toll is being taken of the health of the occupants, particularly of the women and the children.
>
> The burden falls most heavily on those least able to bear it. The women, who are unable to escape from their sordid surroundings, despite their intense and heroic struggle to maintain a state of cleanliness, and the children suffer most. These unwholesome conditions sap the physical fitness of the children and develop their mental processes along lines of abnormal quick-wittedness in the lowest ideals. In these areas there are thousands of children who are condemned by the circumstances of their environment to worse than physical death—to slow-warping influences of poverty, to filthy conditions, and to other evils and dangers which it is easier to imagine than enumerate. If slum reclamation by and through the State achieves no more than physical and moral salvation of the children in these areas, it will have more than justified any financial sacrifice involved. A Christian system cannot be reconciled with a society that continues to tolerate these appalling conditions.[76]

It was with children suffering from these sorts of conditions that the free kindergartens had to cope. Daily, directors and assistants saw first-hand evidence of the effects of poverty on their small charges; each medical inspection revealed a sad tale of little bodies fighting a desperate battle against inadequate food and rest and privacy, and of immature minds prematurely burdened with problems of family insecurity caused by an economic situation over which parents had no control.

In the very middle of the inter-war period, a FKU annual report stated that kindergarten children 'must be both fed and clothed' and referred to kindergarten work as 'social service'.[77] Any preconception about social and economic conditions in the years 1919–39, based on a common belief that, save for 'The Depression'—roughly envisaged as 1929–33—people rubbed along well enough, is quickly dispelled by a glance at any anthology of social testimony from the period, say, Lowenstein's *Weevils in the Flour*.[78] By post-World War II standards, the conditions of the poor (and there were thousands of them) were unbelievably bad. Certainly they deteriorated in the late 1920s and reached an all-time low about 1932, but at no time was the spectre of unemployment, bad housing, inadequate diet and clothing absent from the homes of the working people. The records of the Union, sometimes explicitly, more often by unconscious implication, reinforce this view. The thing which shocks the modern reader of such records, records which, after all, concerned children below school age, is how much poverty and suffering was assumed; life, for the poor, was just like that. Thus, there is no surprise in the tone of Mary Gutteridge's report to the executive in March 1922 that at Montague 'clothing is badly needed' and that the director has 'constantly . . . to refuse children', or that at Renown 'some newcomers are from very poor homes [and] clothing is badly needed'.[79] A year later, the education committee accounted for lower than average attendances at kindergartens by 'much sickness and poverty, owing to unemployment'[80] and expressed gratitude for a £25 donation from the Save the Children Fund to be used by the supervisor, at her discretion, 'for necessitous cases demanding urgent relief'. In October of that year there were four child deaths at Carlton Free Kindergarten from pneumonia.[81] At this kindergarten, according to the 1925 annual report[82], 40 of the 90 children attending were malnourished; at Loreto, Dr Scantlebury-Brown declared 50 per cent of the children to be malnourished. In an attempt to combat this, all kindergartens provided milk each day, with a biscuit or bread and jam; council, stirred by reports of the Union's honorary dentist, had also recommended in 1924 that each child should be given 1/16 of an apple a day to try and combat tooth decay.[83]

The need of dental care for pre-school children was pointed out to the Union by Dr Scantlebury-Brown, who saw in her medical inspections the evil effects of decayed teeth and dirty mouths on a child's general health.[84] In August 1924 she wrote to Mrs a'Beckett stressing the need of dental education for both children and their mothers, and for preventive as well as remedial treatment. Over 60 per cent of the children she had examined medically needed dental treatment; school dental inspection had revealed 'that nearly all children have bad teeth, the damage having been done in the early stages'. Dr Scantlebury-Brown therefore recommended the appointment of an honorary dentist, with a portable dentist's chair, to visit kindergartens one morning a week. Her suggestion was warmly supported by Mary Gutteridge, and the Union immediately responded by appointing Mr A.V. Allwright at an honorarium of £50 per annum, as honorary dentist.[85] The appointment, coupled with the gradual substitution of wholemeal bread for the previous sweet biscuits, was of some benefit; children whose mothers were unable to afford either time or money or both to take them to the dental clinic now received treatment in the familiar surroundings of their own kindergarten from a dentist noted for his 'tact, gentleness and ability'.[86]

This was a start—another pioneering feat of the FKU—but the road ahead was long. In 1926 Mr Allwright was asked to give two mornings (£150 per annum) a week to the kindergartens[87] but, even so, each kindergarten received only one visit in each two years! His 1928 report stressed the need for more frequent inspection, 95 per cent of the children he examined requiring dental treatment.[88] Later, kindergarten children needing considerable treatment with a general anaesthetic were treated at the pre-school dental clinic[89], but Allwright continued visiting kindergartens for dental inspection and minor treatments until his resignation in mid-1938.[90] After this, all children were taken in batches to the dental clinic for treatment; there was no charge to mothers for this; the Union paying £150 per annum to the clinic to meet at least some of the cost.[91]

Improvement in the general state of children's teeth was, however, very slow; living conditions in houses with inadequate plumbing or, in some cases, no internal running water, were not conducive to dental hygiene; and diet, overburdened with sugar and carbohydrates and short on fresh fruit and vegetables, made the situation worse. Dr Scantlebury-Brown stated flatly to the executive in 1928 that 'faulty diet through ignorance and poverty is still one of the chief evils of the kindergarten world'.[92] And Allwright's last report stated that he found only 13 per cent of children whose teeth required no attention[93]—an improvement certainly on the figure ten years before, but still a very small percentage.

Dorothy Rosner, when acting-supervisor, saw the increasing want of the poor reflected in kindergarten children. Carlton, she told the executive in the winter of 1928, 'is very much in need of help'; at Collingwood Mission 'boots, shoes and stockings' are 'wanted urgently'; at Lillian Cannam 'warm clothing for parents and children, also rugs and blankets for beds' are needed.[94] In the same month, out of 105 children at Dorcas Street, South Melbourne, only 20 had fathers in employment.[95]

In 1929, an exceptional number of cases of bronchitis and pneumonia were reported, due to lack of warm clothing; of 54 children examined in one kindergarten by Dr Scantlebury-Brown, 25 were suffering from malnutrition. As usual, appeals in newspapers and on the philanthropic grapevine brought ready response. The Felton Bequest in 1929 provided £100 which Miss Rosner was to use 'in buying warm materials for clothes, and boots; she was also to be able to spend additional on food to supplement the kindergarten lunch where absolutely necessary'.[96] Local shop-keepers—where their own circumstances permitted—gave donations of fruit and groceries. The Eastern Suburbs District Christian Union provided oranges[97]; some country fruit growers sent apples, the Union used money from the Save the Children Fund to provide medical supplies like Hypol; schools made clothes for needy children. Yet, as shown earlier, the better-off sections of the community were themselves victims of the depression; nearly all were less well-off, less able to assist, than they had been; and the response never matched the crying need.

As economic conditions worsened, the mid-morning snack was seen as totally inadequate. First at Carlton[98], later at nearly all kindergartens, a hot mid-day meal was provided, at first for some children, later for all. In many cases mothers and sometimes older children helped in its preparation; fathers too were called in to construct simple stretchers on which children could have a sleep after the meal.[99] Rest was another basic necessity many children lacked, as unemployment led to several families living together in very cramped conditions. The success of these innovations and the reality of their necessity was shown repeatedly when kindergartens reopened after a holiday break; during 'holidays' the children uniformly lost weight.

The desperate situation by 1932 is most graphically described by Dorothy Rosner in her annual report, which I quote in part but at length:

> In surveying the work of the past year the outstanding feature is the increased need for our work in the industrial districts. The consequent results of insecurity of home life, of lack of nourishing food, proper facilities for rest, and of living in an atmosphere tense with unhappy family relationship and divided control of children due to many adults living in a limited area, are shown by the lack of physical energy and the behaviour of the children in Kindergarten.
>
> Summarising the reports from Directors, we find that children are too often pale, hungry and cold, idle, moody, too listless to even talk or smile, or are tired, irritable, restless; are quick to fly into tempers and hurt each other, are unable to concentrate, and are careless of property and materials, and otherwise show nervous excitability and instability, evidence of the wrong conditions in which they are living. The effects of malnourishment is also shown by lowered physique and tendency for sores to cover bodies and be slow in healing.
>
> The result of a limited survey as to conditions in the homes of the children of our Kindergartens shows that our greatest service to them at present is to keep our Kindergartens full in order to alleviate the effects of wrong home conditions due to unemployment. Fortunately, there are many indications that some parents are doing their utmost to give their children the best care possible, but, unfortunately, their scope is so limited, and one can only marvel at the heroic attempts of these people to keep their homes or rooms (as many a home is now comprised of one or two rooms) with any degree of comfort and cleanliness. It is not possible for them to give sufficient nourishing food, clothes or space for proper rest, either day or night.
>
> The following cases will perhaps give an indication of the conditions in which the children live. The worst case of overcrowding is in one district where five families live in one house. There are 20 children between them. The children have never been free from sickness since this mode of living commenced.
>
> Another case is a family of six children—mother in hospital and father out of work—four children minded by daughter of 11 years of age, children suffering from malnutrition and sores.
>
> **Case 1.** T.G., 5 years. Father, a labourer, has been out of work for nearly four

> years. There are seven children living at home. The father is receiving sustenance. The eldest child of about 17 years occasionally has a day's work. The mother went into domestic service in order to earn money to pay the rent; in her absence the children suffered from unwise and insufficient feeding. T. has been unable to attend the Kindergarten for weeks; he has hardly been free from boils, and styes on his eyes, and now has a form of excema under his knees, all caused through malnutrition. His 3-year-old sister is also suffering. Being short of bed clothes, the mother covered this child with an imitation fur coat while she was asleep. The child moved through the evening and in the dark put her hand on the fur and got a dreadful fright and wakened screaming and trembling. Her nerves were in a very bad state, and since her fright has been taking fits. Both these children are attending the hospital. T. has not had a chance of making satisfactory progress, as his attendance at Kindergarten has had to be so broken through illness.
>
> **Case 2.** K.H., 5½ years. Father, a tradesman, has been out of work for three years; all this time the mother has been working. Until K. came to the Kindergarten last July he had spent practically all his play time in the streets; he was rough, noisy, and very difficult to manage, interfered with the other children, lacked concentration, and still does. This year he has been ill off and on with gastric and ear trouble, and now has chicken pox. The mother has now only part time work, and is afraid that she will be put off altogether. The father is at times very depressed, and in the mother's absence evidently talks a great deal to K. about his troubles and insufficient means. The child reflects this depression, and is very nervy. It now worries him to pour out his own milk at Kindergarten, as he is afraid that he will take more than his share. If he has cuts or sores to be dressed he has to see the large bottle of reserve ointment, otherwise he worries that there will not be enough for the other children. He is restless, and it is difficult to find anything that will interest him for any length of time, but any regular duties that he is given he carries out most conscientiously.
>
> **Case 3.** In the home of a grandmother and invalid husband are now living two married daughters with their husbands; one married son and his wife and five children, including one State ward. All husbands are unemployed. There are five rooms and a tent. . . .
>
> We cannot stress too deeply the importance of the early impressions and nurture of children as being the factors that determine the welfare of every citizen, rich or poor. When children are crowded in homes so insecure, comforts so few, and the very necessities of life so limited, we must ask ourselves: What will be the results?[100]

1932 was the year in which the hard-pressed Union itself agreed to finance a second assistant at Dorcas Street to enable more children to be admitted and *fed* at the kindergarten.[101] But the depression did not end there. As late as 1935 a generous local councillor at Fitzroy provided money for children at the Fitzroy Mission Kindergarten to get a 'hot mid-day meal four times a week'.[102] (How had they managed to survive, one wonders, in earlier years?) At Ballarat at this time, 43 per cent of the kindergarten children were reported to 'need more nourishment'. In her 1936 medical report, Dr Mona Blanch, who had replaced Dr Scantlebury-Brown as the Union's medical officer in 1934[103], stated that 29 per cent of the children examined were underweight.[104] This was much less than it had been a few years before, thanks to the hot meal and the extra milk provided, but still over a quarter of all the children attending free kindergartens.

In 1938, when Olive Dodd, the Union's first social worker, presented her first annual report, she wrote that 'there is still much poverty and distress among our kindergarten families'.[105] Conditions were improving, she claimed, but the figures she gave sound terrible to us; only just over half of the fathers of children in the five kindergartens she investigated received the basic wage or over; of the remainder, half were still on sustenance and half were 'casuals'—the group which caused kindergarteners the most concern because the uncertainty and instability of their situation was inevitably reflected in their children. Later in the same year, while the eyes of the world focused on Munich, the education committee recommended to the executive that preference in admission to kindergarten should be given 'to underprivileged children and not to children from homes which received the basic wage and over'.[106] So strong was the Union's philanthropic sense, strengthened undoubtedly by the traumatic experiences of the last 20 years that, in April 1939, the executive decided that, while the question of admission was entirely in the hands of the director and her committee, 'every assurance should be given that these families [i.e. those on or over the basic wage] are only accepted when there is a vacancy and *when all the more needy children have been enrolled first*[107] (author's italics).

And what of the directors and assistants who inevitably bore the brunt of all the extra work and worry during these trying times? What of these mainly young women trained as teachers of pre-school children? It would not seem that they protested on any grounds of principle to the role of maids-of-all-work which may have been thrust upon them, but which they accepted without recorded complaint. Far from complaining in fact, the kindergarten directors accepted their philanthropic tasks as an integral part of the job, discussing at their first meeting of 1931 the part they should play 'in Relief Work during this year of hardship'.[108] And their tasks were legion. For instance, in 1930 the executive decided that money from the Danks Trust should be used to buy boots, shoes, and material at wholesale prices to be distributed to kindergartens, as this was more economical than distributing cash itself for each kindergarten to spend. And what was to be done with the material? The directors were required 'to cut out garments and arrange for mothers to make them up at kindergartens'.[109] The implications of this calm assumption are considerable—not only that the directors would, but that they could and presumably did. It was not till 1937 that the supervisor suggested to the executive that perhaps an auxiliary could be formed to deal with 'the collection and distribution of clothes and gifts to kindergartens'.[110] The crisis of the poliomyelitis epidemic and then the numerous emergencies of the war period prevented, for many years, the development of any firm policy to reduce a director's domestic chores.

However, one move to lift some of the burden of social work from the shoulders of educators was made late in the inter-war period with the appointment in March 1936 of a part-time social worker to the Union.[111] Miss Olive Dodd, M.A., Dip.Ed., Dip.Soc.Stud., one of the early graduates from the University of Melbourne's new social studies course, was appointed part-time for the first year (two mornings and one evening) as £80 was all the Union could afford as salary. However, from 1937 on, the appointment was a full-time one and the salary £200 per annum. In 1940 Miss Grutzner succeeded Miss Dodd, who later returned to the Union as a member of the executive. The executive had no doubt of the need for a social worker; the 1936 annual report states:

> The Free Kindergarten Union has, owing partly to the existing social conditions, and partly to the intimate part it plays in the lives of children and parents in the industrial suburbs, grown far beyond the *original intention* of the kindergarten. It has become in reality *a centre of social service*, and many problems, which should actually have no connection with the kindergarten in the true sense of the word, have arisen to be dealt with by already over-worked Directors. (author's italics)

Nor can we, looking back, doubt the great value not only to kindergarten staff but also to kindergarten families of the Union's successive social workers.

The trained professional was quickly able to assess cases which would benefit from referral to some outside agency—hospital, benevolent society, baby health centre, district nursing society, Sustenance Department, for example, and to which agency each case should appropriately be referred. She was able to assess a family situation and so make a child's behaviour and needs more easily understandable to a director; simply by listening she was able, in many instances, to help a family 'talk out' their problems and see for themselves how best to cope with them; she was also able—in only a few cases—quietly to distribute a little money to needy families 'either to alleviate immediate distress or to supplement a very inadequate income'.[112]

Nevertheless it remained the directors and assistants who came daily into contact with families in need; it was they who reported conditions and needs to the supervisor and to their local committees; it was they who oversaw the preparation, serving, and clearing up of the mid-day meal, who organized the placing of stretchers, the settling of restless children, who ensured the vital period of quietness; it was they who weighed children weekly, who assisted at medical inspection. And all this in addition to their role as kindergarten teachers.

It was all done, too, on the usual grossly inadequate salary. In 1930, in common with employers throughout Australia, the Union embarked on a process of salary reduction.[113] Miss Gutteridge's and Miss Rosner's salaries were each reduced by £50; the secretary's by £25. But it seems unlikely that directors and assistants suffered from this policy because the executive determined that 'no salary under £150 should be reduced, as even under the existing scale this does not reach the basic wage'. Directors' salaries at this time seem to have averaged about £140 per annum and the assistants', £100. Staff had, however, to forego their annual increments. Inevitably, as middle-class families felt the pinch of economic depression, the loss of trained kindergarten staff continued. Some families could no longer afford to subsidize a kindergartener daughter; some daughters were no longer prepared to be subsidized. Already in 1929 the Union had admitted:

> It is only because many girls have been in a position to take up kindergarten work who have not had to depend on a kindergarten salary as their means of living that we have been able to carry on with such low salaries . . . There have been, however, many who had to take up professional work of some sort to provide for themselves, who, because of the low salaries, have had to choose other walks in life.[114]

During the 1930s this wastage continued, putting heavy strain on trained staff who not only would but could afford to remain in Union kindergartens. The debt of the Union (and, implicitly, of the kindergarten children and their families) to these kindergarteners was warmly acknowledged: 'Our Directors and Assistants work harder with longer hours and for a lower rate of pay than any other professional group, because they feel that their work is worthwhile'.[115] There is some evidence that where a local committee was unable to find the whole of a director's salary, the Union stepped in to supplement it. By the outbreak of war, salaries had risen a trifle and apparently approximated to £150 for directors and £120 for assistants.[116]

The directors and assistants did not, however, work alone. The inter-war period saw the full glory of the system of voluntary helpers who, since the start of the kindergarten movement had been one of its chief sources of labour. Earlier the executive's concern at the shortage of voluntary helpers towards the close of World War I was mentioned; the shortage persisted, exacerbated by the influenza epidemic of 1919, and in 1920 Miss Gwladys Barker was appointed[117] to take over from Miss Glendinning (by that time grossly overworked) the recruitment and organization of voluntary helpers. Miss Barker visited girls schools to impress on school leavers the social value of kindergarten work and to urge those not proposing to seek paid employment to work as helpers in kindergartens. Gradually, numbers increased; by 1926 there were 200 young women assisting Union kindergartens in this way[118]; by 1929 there were over 400.[119] They were given brief lecture courses to prepare them for their work, and regular meetings were held to keep them in touch with each other and with the wider kindergarten movement. In 1927, when the South Melbourne Kindergarten in Dorcas Street asked for a second assistant which the Union was unable to afford, the executive suggested instead the increased use of voluntary helpers there.[120] In fact, these young women were unpaid extensions of the directors and assistants, drawn from the same social group, sharing the same values and assumptions. Some of them spent one day a week at a particular kindergarten; some more; a few only worked on an occasional or emergency basis.

By the mid-1930s a decline in the number of voluntary helpers was apparent[121]; its reason was not stated, perhaps not even sought, at the time, but it seems likely that the exigencies of the worst of the depression years had driven many girls of the social and economic group which provided voluntary helpers into the field of paid employment. In 1938 an attempt was made to keep up the supply of voluntary helpers by arranging for 50 students from the Invergowrie Homecraft Hostel to work in free kindergartens during part of their course[122]—an arrangement which allegedly benefited the students as well as the kindergartens. Though numbers fell during the late 1930s, however, there is no doubt, as the executive realized and acknowledged, that much of the work of the kindergartens in the inter-war period would have been impossible without the voluntary helpers. They remained, in years when, for financial reasons, no increase in paid staff was possible, an irreplaceable labour force. Because they were basically untrained, however, and because they undertook the work from philanthropic motives, from a desire, usually based on religious conviction, to be of service to those less fortunately placed, their influence was always on the philanthropic rather than on the educational side of kindergarten work.

The voluntary helpers were not the only people who worked in an unpaid capacity for the free kindergartens. Obviously the Union executive and all the local committees were voluntary too; and to the extent that the paid staff worked for a lower-than-living wage far beyond the call of professional duty, they too were to some degree voluntary. But the story does not end here. The past students of the KTC, moved by the chillingly evident want of the children they saw daily, resolved in 1924 to establish for them a holiday home in the country, which the past students would finance by their own efforts.[123] Their intention was recorded bluntly, even starkly; one wonders if they had, then, any faint inkling of the problems to come, of the weight of the burden they were creating for themselves to shoulder, of the tremendous value their realized dream was to be to some of Melbourne's poorer families:

> The aim of the Past Students Association this year is to open a Kindergarten Holiday Home by next February. Mr Duncan has very generously given us a ¾ of an acre block of land at Boronia . . . and we shall build the Home there. We expect it to cost at least £1000 and we already have in hand £206 . . . The Home will be open all the year round and will have accommodation for fifteen children who will go from all the free kindergartens of Melbourne. The Past Students hope to raise £50 more by a dance which they are holding in the Hawthorn Town Hall on August 8th.

Things did not go entirely as planned. Funds took longer to raise than expected; by 1925 the total in hand was £870[124]; by 1926 it was £1400[125], and designs for the building were drawn up—in brick, not weatherboard as originally intended, because of fire risk and maintenance costs. But there was a last-minute change of plan and the association finally bought an existing wooden cottage at Forest Hill; they sold the land at Boronia to cover the additional cost of alterations and repairs. So, in place of a specifically designed brick residential kindergarten for fifteen, the holiday home opened in an adapted weatherboard farmhouse for only ten children.[126] The opening was delayed because of essential modifications, and the first children—from the Brunswick kindergarten—were received on 28 March 1928.

Finance was a constant anxiety. Mrs M.M. Phillips was appointed by the executive to organize an appeal for the home, which she did most successfully early in 1927 when £1000 was raised. The Charities Board (forerunner of the Hospitals and Charities Commission which in 1978 was absorbed into the Health Commission) authorized this appeal and in general lent its full support to the home.[127] Charitable trusts, while the economic climate permitted, were also generous. The continuing burden of support (apart from a small annual grant from the Charities Board) fell, naturally, on the past students, and they threw themselves eagerly into the work. They did all manner of odd jobs—gardening, cleaning, baby-sitting, sewing, and 'fine laundry'; they produced plays; they held dances; and always the money was channelled to the holiday home. The Union itself, though always concerned for and about the home, was rarely able to give financial support. The Voluntary Helpers Association undertook to pay the home's telephone and electricity bills[128], a task increasingly difficult as the 1930s progressed and membership of the Association declined.

This is not the place for a lengthy account of the holiday home; that has already been written, in loving and amusing detail, by a group of kindergarteners intimately associated with it. They tell, too, of the opening of a second home, 'Ware', at East Ringwood in 1937. We may here note, however, a few points of interest.

One is the stress placed on the physical condition of the children. This is scarcely surprising in view of the conditions from which the children came. The aim of the home was simple enough—'a proper diet . . . comfortable beds, one for each child, warm baths, and plenty of healthy exercise'.[129] But there was what seems, to our over-fed generation, an almost obsessive concern with a child's weight, again not surprising when one recalls the reports of undernourishment given yearly by the Union medical officers. Year after year, the past students' report contains some such phrase as 'average weight gain 1.85 lbs' (or 1.75 or 1.91 as the case might be). Children usually spent three weeks at the home, though sometimes they were kept longer if an extended stay seemed likely to be of real benefit. Thus, in 1936, 'six delicate children from City Kindergarten were kept six weeks with an average gain of five lbs'.[130] The number of children rose from ten to fifteen in 1929 when a new playroom was built and the old converted into extra sleeping quarters. The past students became almost lyrical as they watched the delight of slum children (often initially apprehensive) in the open-air, country life. Appealing in 1936 for funds to rebuild the home, Miss Ruth Drake, then past students' president, wrote:

> We feel sure that all who read this report have only to take their friends to visit the Home one sunny day to see small figures in coloured smocks, flitting about among the gum trees, playing make-believe in the log cabin, gathering eggs and helping the man to bring home the cows, to see their legs becoming sturdy, pale cheeks rosy and the lines smoothed out from small faces, and the money will be forthcoming.[131]

The money was forthcoming; a fine, new, brick building with accommodation for 20 replaced the little weatherboard cottage, and, unexpectedly, a second holiday home was acquired, the outright gift of Mr F.J. Davey[132]; it ensured the provision of precious country holidays for ten more children, and further financial burdens for the past students who were responsible for its upkeep! With places available for 30 children, a group from each free kindergarten was able to be sent away annually.

In August 1937, Melbourne was struck by the worst epidemic of poliomyelitis in its history.[133] Not only were the free kindergartens closed, but the two holiday homes were temporarily offered to, and accepted by, the Charities Board as after-care centres for the child victims. Both homes reverted to their kindergarten purpose in third term, 1938. The kindergartens themselves were closed from August 1937 to March 1938; one assistant and two kindergarten children died of the disease, and nearly 50 children contracted it. Directors and assistants worked, while their kindergartens were closed, at after-care centres, where their training proved invaluable in the rehabilitation of small patients, partially or completely paralysed.

One more point may be made concerning the foundation and maintenance of the holiday homes by the past students. The note which strikes a reader of the annual past students' reports is the almost exclusive place occupied in them by the homes. The concern and enthusiasm of at least some of the college graduates seems to have become almost obsessive—any interest in the education of young children seems to have been driven out by an overwhelming concern for their physical condition. This was natural enough, and highly commendable in the prevailing economic climate, and would certainly not have been denied by the past students. 'The activities of the Past Students Association have been concerned solely with the Holiday Home during the past year', runs one annual report[134]; and again, when announcing the opening of the rebuilt home at Forest Hill and the acquisition of 'Ware'[135], 'Never before has it been so pleasing for the Past Students . . . to put before you their report'. The executive shared the same philanthropic spirit, commending the association for its 'splendid piece of social service'.[136]

There is evidence suggesting that not just the Past Students but the Union generally—staff, executive, and committees alike—were so engrossed with the urgent need for philanthropy and with the numerous and continuing financial efforts necessary to maintain the bare existence of both Union and kindergartens, that the time and thought they could spare for educational activities were reduced. The original College Advisory Council, for instance, set up in 1927, met only three times a year and seems to have been concerned largely with business affairs, with balancing the budget and, in 1933, paying off the debt on the College buildings.[137] In an attempt to infuse some more academic interest into the Advisory Council, a changed constitution in 1935 established an Educational Committee of the College 'to set the educational standard and to keep in touch with modern trends in education'.[138]

This committee seems to have met regularly[139], but the Advisory Council itself became virtually moribund. Mrs a'Beckett in 1939 remarked that it had not met for three years and asked whether it served any useful purpose. She further stated that the Advisory Council had been created 'to give the College a definite standing in the community from the educational point of view, as a contrast to the philanthropic side of the Union's work'.[140] Three months later she stressed that 'the philanthropic side of the Union must on no account be confused with College activities'.[141] Only an imbalance between philanthropy and education could have explained her reiteration of this point.

It seems clear that by 1939, when World War II broke out, the pendulum, always delicately poised, had swung decisively away from education in the direction of philanthropy.

Nevertheless, when the sorry tale of slower growth rate and financial desperation has been told, and every allowance made for the inevitable and essential philanthropic bias in kindergarten work in the inter-war years, there were, in Victoria, in 1939, 30 free kindergartens affiliated with the Union. This is a formidable total, compared with numbers in other States. In New South Wales, for instance, where a Union had been founded in 1895, there were only 16; in South Australia, ten; in the other States, fewer still; while in Tasmania, a Union had been established only in the previous year. In addition, the example of the Union had led, in Victoria, to the establishment of many church and private kindergartens in the years between the wars, while numerous independent schools had kindergarten departments. Many of these non-union kindergartens were staffed by kindergarteners trained by the Union's teachers at the Union's College. In this way, the educational influence of the Union spread far beyond the ambit of affiliated kindergartens, while, via the independent school, kindergartens were gradually reaching an increasing number of middle-class homes, where there was no philanthropic need for kindergartens. This is of prime importance, if we are to understand the development of the kindergarten movement and the fortunes of the Union during World War II and in the post-war years.

Chapter 6

World War II Expansion—Entry of the Health Department

In 1936, as Victoria clambered slowly back from the depths of the great depression, Mary Gutteridge left Melbourne for a year's study leave in the USA. She had originally applied for this at the end of 1934, before Dorothy Rosner became ill. The Union appointed Miss Beatrice Gerahty of Sydney as acting-principal for 1936, expecting Miss Rosner to be her vice-principal and supervisor. When it became clear that Miss Rosner would not recover from her illness, Miss Eva Walker was appointed supervisor, a post she held for three years. Miss Gerahty's appointment as acting-principal was naturally for one year only, and she returned to the Sydney FKU at the end of 1936 after what must have been a very sad and difficult year in Melbourne; only a few months later the Union learnt with regret of her sudden death.[1]

Mary Gutteridge did not, after all, return to Melbourne, resigning for health reasons during 1936 and refusing to reconsider her decision even on the offer of a second year's leave to recuperate. She had been associated with the Union for 15 years as principal and, till 1930, as supervisor; under her, the training course had been built up and expanded to include post-diploma work and, despite perpetual financial problems, she had always striven to maintain and even raise the standard of the courses. She had been responsible for the establishment of the nursery schools, and had been a prime mover, together with Dorothy Rosner, in the many efforts to improve the physical as well as the educational condition of free kindergarten children. Her career was by no means over: after obtaining her doctorate in Child Psychology from Columbia University in 1939, she became head of the Department of Early Childhood

Education at the Merrill-Palmer School in Detroit where she remained till 1952; she died in Brisbane in 1962.[2]

The Union's next principal, a name now famous in pre-school annals, was Miss Christine Heinig, Ph.B., M.A., from Columbia University where she had been outstanding in her special field of pre-school education.[3] She remained with the Union for only two years, 1937 and 1938, but her subsequent career in the AAPSCD enabled her to remain closely in touch with the kindergarten movement in Victoria. Another American followed Miss Heinig—Dr Margaret McFarland[4], also a graduate of Columbia; she too remained only two years with the Union, 1939 and 1940, and was succeeded in 1941 by Miss H.M. Paul.[5] Helen Paul was the first of the Union's own KTC diplomates to be appointed principal; the College was coming of age. Her successors as principal, Miss Madeline Crump (1943–51) and Miss Heather Lyon (1952–76), were also KTC trained.

The brevity of Miss Paul's period as principal, some 18 months only, is explained by a major reorganization of the Union in 1943, by which the training and practical sides of the work were divided. The principal, with an augmented office staff, remained at Mooroolbeek in charge of a rapidly growing student population and an expanding training course. The Union still retained ultimate responsibility for the College, but since 1941 the College had been administered by its own Council on which the Union had three representatives.[6] With the separation of the training and practical sides of the Union's activities, the Union offices, where the field work of the free kindergartens was centred, moved back into the city, and here a new officer, the Director of Pre-School Activities, was to be found, with a small secretarial staff and a supervisor. For directors and assistants, for local committees, and for the executive and education committee, this was now the heart of the Union; and the heart of that heart was 'Muffie' Paul, first Director of Pre-School Activities.[7]

The decade which saw these numerous staff changes and this major administrative alteration was not only the decade which included World War II, but also the decade which saw a great upsurge of interest in kindergarten work, both among governments and among the general public. It was as if a 30-year gestation period had been necessary before the carefully sown and nurtured seeds of kindergarten philosophy germinated. Ironically, this upsurge of interest in and an increasing demand for kindergartens and trained kindergarteners, found the Union—like its counterparts in other States—desperately short of money, and trained kindergarteners in very short supply.

Any profession, like nursing, which recruits and employs young unmarried women, is bound to have a high wastage rate; today it is not so high—many girls work after marriage, and many women return to their profession after their children have gone to school. In the previous generation this was not so: the choice was marriage or a career except in a few exceptional cases; for example, the two eminent women doctors, Jean McNamara and Vera Scantlebury-Brown.

Shortage of trained staff was gradually, almost imperceptibly, beginning to erode the quality of the education which kindergarteners sought to provide for pre-schoolers. Miss Gerahty, who came to Victoria as an outsider and looked at its kindergarten world with an impartial eye, saw this. In November 1936, she spoke of 'the large numbers of children in each kindergarten' and urged 'the Council to consider carefully the wisdom of reducing these numbers in the interests of improving the standard of the work'.[8]

Christine Heinig saw this too. One of her aims was to tackle the problem from the other end—not to decrease the number of children but to increase the number of students in training. If this were achieved, the College would have more money, could employ more (and better qualified?) staff, and thus produce more, better-equipped young kindergarteners. But she realized that, while salaries remained low, any increase in student numbers was unlikely. In her first year there were 45 diploma students; in her second, 53; but she strove, by stressing post-diploma work and in-service training, to raise the qualifications of trained staff.[9] She also succeeded in creating a new library at Mooroolbeek—large and well-lit—to house a growing collection of reference and professional books, some brought with her from the USA, some the fruit of the Rosner Memorial Fund.[10]

Dr McFarland continued Miss Heinig's efforts; it was her suggestion that the entry qualification for the KTC should be formally raised from Intermediate to Leaving Certificate[11] though this change was not in fact implemented till 1943. In her two years here, there were 38 (1939) and 55 (1940) diploma students.[12] While salaries remained low there was little likelihood of significant increase.

With the outbreak of war, the situation worsened again: some trained kindergarteners left their profession to join one of the services or engage in war work at a much higher salary; some potential students doubtless turned their energies elsewhere. In 1940 there was considerable difficulty in filling some vacant directors' positions because of low salaries, which now seemed even lower in comparison with those available elsewhere. By 1941, Union salaries had fallen below the level of those paid by Presbyterian kindergartens where the minimum was £150 per annum for a director and £100 for an assistant.[13] In December 1941, Miss Paul reported great trouble in filling kindergarten vacancies for the coming year, 21 trained kindergarteners having resigned from the Union in the last 12 months; six directors and four assistants had gone to other jobs, eight assistants had taken kindergarten posts outside the Union, three were to be married and five of the latest batch of diplomates had taken sub-primary teaching posts.[14] As a result, from the start of 1942, Union salaries rose appreciably for the first time in its history.[15] Directors in training kindergartens received £170 per annum, and in non-training kindergartens £156; assistants were to start at £100 and receive, by annual increments, £140 after six years service; third-year students working as second assistants in large kindergartens were to receive a salary of £90 instead of the current £80. In very small kindergartens where the Union had no salary responsibility as no assistant was employed, the Union now undertook to pay half the director's salary—that is, £75.

In 1941 the Union had paid out £2945 in salaries, and local committees £6275; now these figures would increase to £3381 and £6726. The government grant to the Union at the time was £2500 per annum, but a deputation to the Premier in October 1941[16] led to a promise of an additional £2000 payable for one year only (1941–42). In May 1942, however, the executive acknowledged that the staffing position was still serious and approved an education committee recommendation for a further rise in salaries.[17] Directors were, from the start of 1943, to receive £200 per annum and non-training directors £170; other salaries were to rise commensurately. The Victorian Government again came to the rescue to make these rises possible, increasing the grant to £5000[18]; in addition, the Union received a special non-recurring grant from the Commonwealth Government—the first federal funding ever received—plus a matching, additional £1000 from the Victorian Government.[19]

Financial anxiety continued, however, exacerbated not only by war-time inflation, but also by numerous requests for affiliation from new or proposed kindergartens. Indeed, in August 1944, Mary Lush, then president of the Union, warned the executive that they would have to consider most carefully applications for affiliation 'as we seem to have reached the limit of expansion possible with the staff at our disposal'.[20] As if to emphasize her point, the Union had, in that same year, recommended the appointment of a third-year student as director of the new kindergarten at Hughesdale[21]; this particular appointment was a great success, but the event shows that there was no margin—every available kindergartener was employed. The demand for kindergarteners in fact now exceeded the Union's capacity to respond.

This inability was despite a directive from the Commonwealth Manpower Authority stating that kindergarten teachers were not permitted to take other positions[22]—including enlistment in the women's services—which meant that at least for the duration of the war existing staff were reasonably assured. State government grants continued to rise: £7856 in 1945 and £12 192 in 1946, partly as a response to a successful deputation late in 1944 urging the increase 'to permit teachers' salaries being raised to the scale paid to Infant Teachers in the State service'.[23] When the war ended, the rate for training directors was £250 per annum, for non-training directors £225, for assistants £180 and for student-assistants £160.[24] The Union was unable, however, to offer the inducement of any superannuation scheme, such as the Presbyterian Kindergarten Council and the Victorian Education Department offered, because a 'very heavy endowment' would be needed to start and maintain a scheme covering employees whose working life as kindergarteners was desirably brief.[25]

During the war, in fact, the Union was virtually marking time; despite the considerable salary rises of those years, the financial position of kindergarteners relative to comparable alternative workers—nurses, say, or school teachers—was little better than it had been in 1939, and the problem remained of attracting, training, and retaining a larger body of well-qualified professionals. If the relatively depressed salary scale of kindergarteners was approximately the same, however, after five years of war, little else in the kindergarten world remained unchanged. Some of the changes of the war years will be traced here; changes in the College, and in its educational aims and achievements, will be followed in the next chapter.

One of the surprising characteristics of the Free Kindergarten Union, to the inquiring outsider, is the absence in that organization for many years of any kind of auxiliary. The sole exception seems to have been the Motor Car Auxiliary of women to transport children to and from the holiday homes. Hospitals—private as well as public—developed their auxiliaries very soon after World War I; schools had their parents associations or mothers clubs; churches had their guilds or fellowships, one of whose objects was the raising of money: not so the FKU. The reason was probably that the whole organization was, in a sense, an auxiliary. Everyone concerned with free kindergartens contributed both money and labour to the best of his or her ability. Thus the local committees and the executive alike engaged in numerous fund-raising activities as well as performing the bread-and-butter tasks of administration; the past students gave hugely of their time and efforts as, in effect, an auxiliary of the holiday homes; the voluntary helpers were, in effect, a working auxiliary, and also made donations in cash or in kind to the Union or to particular kindergartens.

There was apparently no thought throughout the worst of the depression years that a specifically money-raising organization should be set up, distinct from the other bodies which comprised the Union. Probably no one had time to think of such a thing; if they had, its members would have certainly been the same women wearing different hats. Not till 1937 do we find the establishment of a General Auxiliary[26], inaugurated by Eva Walker, supervisor of non-training kindergartens. Its object was the collection, in one place, of all the varied articles like clothing, toys, and groceries, contributed to the Union for its kindergartens, and their sorting and distribution according to need. Eva Walker had worked at the Lady Forster Kindergarten during the worst of the depression; the memory was still vivid to her of a trained director's time being eroded while she personally bought and delivered butcher's meat to needy families, while she fitted mothers with dresses and children with boots. The General Auxiliary was installed in rooms in Flinders Lane lent by Mr Critchley Parker, husband of a member of the Union executive. In the following year the auxiliary was 'registered as a shop'[27]. The idea here—quite probably stemming from Miss Heinig—seems to have been to sell educational toys for children which would be demonstrated to prospective buyers at the shop by a trained kindergartener. This scheme was not a success as it required to start it far more stock and equipment than the Union could possibly afford. But the notion of proper toys which would develop a child's handiness and powers of discrimination and concentration while he used them, was in the ascendant, and received a considerable boost in January 1939 when the AAPSCD held its first, well-publicized conference in Melbourne. An enterprising business man, Mr T. Atyeo, better known as Tim the Toyman, approached the Union suggesting that both he and the Union would benefit—he commercially and the Union in its educational efforts—by co-operating. An agreement was reached whereby a trained kindergartener (Eva Walker took this job too, after her resignation as supervisor at the end of 1938) was to attend at his shop 'to explain and demonstrate equipment and give advice to parents and teachers'.[28] Tim also provided a small office space for the Union and the AAPSCD to be entered through his 'display centre', and gave publicity in his advertisements to kindergarten and pre-school activities. The Union was to advise him on the selection of goods for display and for sale. All this was free of charge to the Union. In return Tim the Toyman was allowed to label his goods 'recommended and approved by the Free Kindergarten Union of Victoria' and they were to recommend his shop to kindergartens, parents, and teachers as the best place to obtain toys and equipment. This agreement lasted, on paper, till 1943; in practice, most of the clauses were never put into effect. Tim remained a successful business enterprise, the Union an educational and philanthropic one. The little General Auxiliary continued in a very humble way collecting and distributing goods for needy kindergartens; at least this was one less task for the busy supervisor and directors.

Meanwhile, the warehouse in Flinders Lane remained at the Union's disposal and, with the outbreak of war, the Union at once put it to good use. It so happened that Mrs George (later Lady) Paton, an executive member, returned from England in mid-1939, bringing with her the then novel idea of saving and recycling waste—a thrifty notion which appealed temperamentally to the Union and commercially to various big manufacturers. The Union began in a small way with tooth-paste tubes collected in bins placed on stations by the Victorian Railways; the members responsible for this were known as the Special Efforts Committee and later, after an inspired coat of paint on the entry to the warehouse, as The Silver Ooor.[29] Under the dynamic leadership of Mrs Rita May Harris, for whom the Keele Street Kindergarten in Collingwood was named some years later, the Silver Door expanded into the business of waste collection, sorting, and *sale*. Big hoppers were obtained--separate for paper, tin foil, aluminium, and lead (oh, the energy expended in squeezing that last atom of tooth paste out of a tube, and the horrid problem of rats attracted by the odd fleck of cheese in a Kraft wrapping!). The Silver Door became *the* auxiliary of the FKU as well as the Union's war effort, and everyone benefited. By early 1941, the Silver Door had raised £700 for the Union, half of which went to bridge the gap between the government grant and assistants' salaries[30]; by the time Mrs Harris resigned as convener in May 1945, over £11 000 had been raised in six years.[31]

Union finances, as we have noticed many times, were never rosy, but there is a case for saying that without the Silver Door—most of whose contributions were earmarked for salaries—the Union might have ceased to exist in the early 1940s. Without the small but essential increase in salaries, it seems unlikely that sufficient students and thus kindergarteners would have been available in those years to keep Union kindergartens functioning, at least with Union-trained staff.

A second big development in the years of World War II was the greatly increased demand for kindergartens. I am not speaking here of the demand for day-care centres, child-minding institutions for the children of women working in factories as part of the war effort; these will be discussed later. Here I am referring to the increase in demand for conventional, sessional kindergartens, for places of pre-school education—a demand which had barely existed when the little Mooroolbeek Kindergarten had succumbed to parental indifference some 20 years before.

When war broke out in September 1939, there were 30 kindergartens affiliated with the Union; in 1946 there were 43—that is, an increase of 13 or 43 per cent in seven years.[32]

The Union list of affiliated kindergartens had been increased by the addition of kindergartens at North Melbourne (Lady Huntingfield, opened in 1940); at Essendon in 1941 (the Coronation Kindergarten which had for several years been refused affiliation until it was adequately housed); and at Fishermen's

Bend in 1942, the Ada Mary a'Beckett, named for the recently resigned, long-term president of the Union who had now become president of the AAPSCD; this kindergarten was the first to serve a Housing Commission area. At Hughesdale in 1944 a kindergarten was opened in a very different area; at that time Hughesdale was by far the furthest extension of the Union south-east of Melbourne, and it enjoyed an annual grant of £200 from the Oakleigh City Council. In the same year there originated a kindergarten in Richmond, known rather quaintly as the Woollies Appeal Kindergarten from the war effort which initially brought members of its local committee together; and also at Moonee Ponds, Middle Park, and Dandenong—this last a nursery school—together with two country kindergartens at Mildura and Castlemaine. The following year saw another country kindergarten affiliated, this one at Euroa, and, in the city, kindergartens at Sunshine, Spotswood, and Flemington—named Hopetoun and established, like Lady Huntingfield, by the Melbourne City Council. Finally in November 1945 a new kindergarten, Dobson, at Maidstone was affiliated.

In the same period, Yooralla and Loreto Free Kindergartens disaffiliated from the Union; the case of Yooralla has already been noticed; that of Loreto was the result of entirely new developments in the pre-school world. Loreto's disaffiliation was one outcome of a series of interlocking factors which included the Australian Council for Educational Research, the AAPSCD, and the Commonwealth Government.[33] Chapter 4 showed how the first tentative steps of the KTC into research in the pre-school field had been funded by the Carnegie Corporation. This corporation, too, from 1930 to 1942, financed the new ACER—a body which investigated and made recommendations on the basis of its investigations into all levels of Australian education. This included pre-school education, interest in which was further quickened with the appointment of Christine Heinig as principal of the College and supervisor of training kindergartens in 1937. Miss Heinig quickly noticed the need for a great expansion in Victorian pre-school education both in depth and in breadth. Her arrival coincided with the holding in Australia of the now-famous New Education Fellowship (NEF) Conference in 1937, when educational talent from all over the world met here, and delegates, travelling widely throughout the States, aroused tremendous interest in the needs of Australian education and possible fields of development. For pre-school education, the most evident immediate result of this NEF Conference was the establishment, only a year later, of the AAPSCD, several members of which had attended the NEF Conference, including Miss Heinig, Mrs a'Beckett, and many FKU directors and assistants.

The AAPSCD was a national not a state body and, as such, was able to

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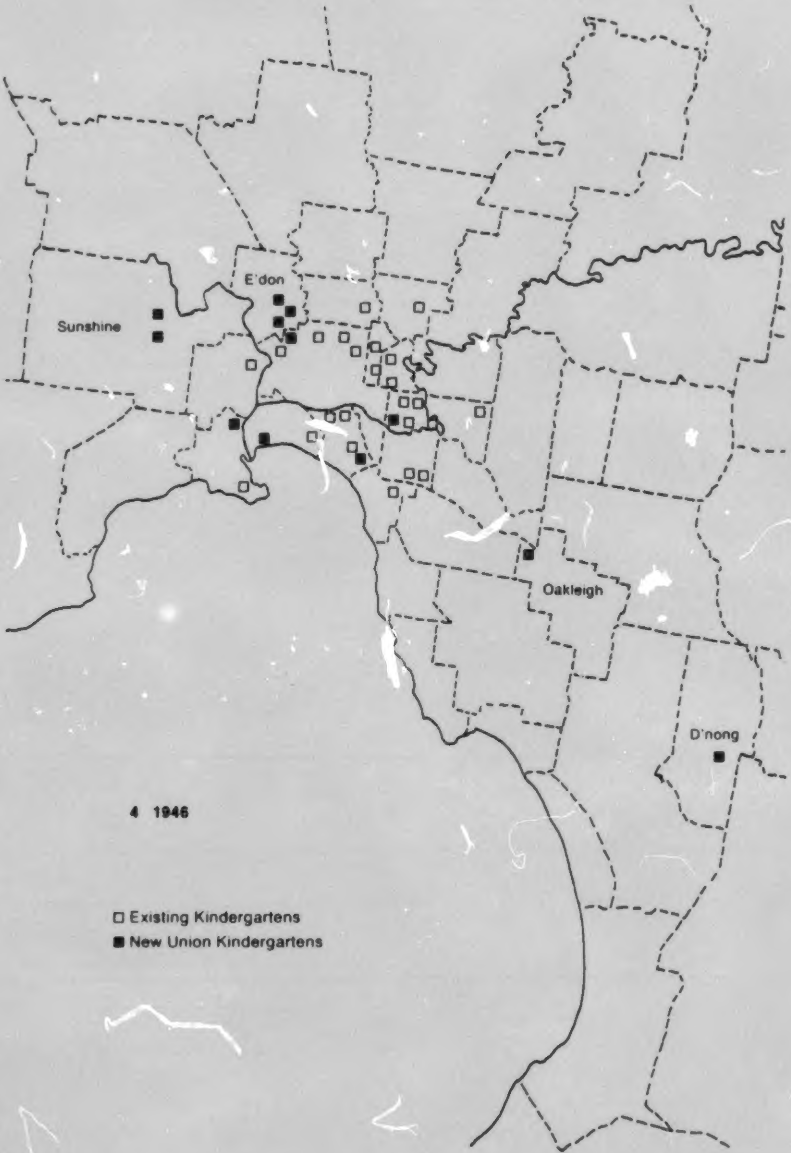
E'don
Sunshine
Oakleigh
D'nong
4 1946
□ Existing Kindergartens
■ New Union Kindergartens

bring pressure to bear on the Commonwealth Government for assistance with pre-school education. The immediate result of this was a federal grant, given via the kindergarten unions in each State, for the setting up in each capital city of a model pre-school centre—named for the Governor-General's wife, the Lady Gowrie Child Centres. Christine Heinig, who had left the Union at the end of 1938 to become chief executive officer of the AAPSCD, played a major role in the design, building, equipping, and staffing of these centres. Their value in impressing on Australian parents and educationalists the possibilities of pre-school education can scarcely be overestimated.

The insights gained from the NEF Conference and the revelations made at the AAPSCD's first conference in 1939 combined to affect the kindergarten movement in another way as well. It was not only Victoria's Free Kindergarten Union which was short of funds; all state Unions were in similar case; so were the kindergartens run by the various churches. The Presbyterian Church, for instance, which had opened its first free kindergarten in Napier Street, Fitzroy in 1917, had established other kindergartens in inner areas since that time, and by 1939 had seven kindergartens staffed by 14 state-trained sub-primary teachers.[34] In their educational work, in their community service to needy families, in their use of voluntary helpers, in their system of local committees drawn from members of churches in more affluent suburbs, even in the opening of a holiday home for kindergarten children in the Dandenongs, the Presbyterian system closely paralleled the Union's. The differences were that, while the Union was concerned solely with pre-school children and their families, the Presbyterian system was part of the bigger Youth Department of the church, that the Union trained its own staff, while the Presbyterian kindergartens depended on the Victorian Education Department; and that the Union had for 30 years received a state government grant, while the church relied solely on its own charitable funds for support. By 1940, the church, like the Union, was desperate for funding for its kindergartens. They had a choice, said the Youth Department annual report: they could close one or two kindergartens, or they could reduce staff or salaries, or they could use untrained staff (meaning, presumably, volunteer staff). Characteristically, the church rejected all three possibilities and elected to try to obtain more funds.

The Church of England whose existing regrettable 'system' has been already referred to, was at last stirred to action—and it seems reasonable to suppose that the NEF Conference and the formation of the AAPSCD had their effect here as elsewhere—and began to seek ways to put its pre-school house in order.[35] The archbishop called on the ubiquitous Eva Walker to conduct for the church a survey of the fragmented groups of children under untrained minders which comprised the Anglican system. Miss Walker's frank report so distressed him that he set up the Church of England Kindergarten Council of which, in 1944, Miss Win Griffiths, a KTC diplomate and previously director of the new Lady Gowrie Child Centre, became supervisor.

The Roman Catholic Church at the outbreak of war had 11 kindergartens under the umbrella of the Catholic Education Office.[36] Although some Catholic thought was hostile to kindergartens on principle, on the assumption that preschool children are best at home with mother, most contemporary Catholic spokesmen favoured the extension of Catholic kindergartens especially in poorer areas, where overworked and often ignorant mothers living in poor conditions could not provide a good background for the physical, educational, and social development of a child. Some feared, however, that attendance at a non-Catholic kindergarten could lead to automatic attendance at the local state school, and thus weaken the Catholic parish school.

In 1943, representatives of the Anglican, Catholic and Presbyterian churches joined in an approach to the Victorian Government for funding for denominational kindergartens.[37] The problem to be circumvented was the 1872 Victorian Education Act, under which no religious educational institution was eligible for state finance; the problem was solved for kindergartens in 1944 when legislation enabled grants to both Union and church kindergartens to be paid via the Health Department instead of via the Education Department.

We will consider in more detail later this masterly piece of bureaucratic and legislative juggling by which responsibility was shifted from one department to another; here we may pause to consider one particular consequence of that shift to the Union. Loreto Free Kindergarten had been a Union affiliate since before World War I. The executive had agonized over the original affiliation and had strictly scrutinized the Kindergarten when it moved temporarily to Fitzroy. From time to time during the intervening period, the question of religious training in Union kindergartens had arisen.[38] During the inter-war years, several Catholic kindergartens had been opened, such as Manresa in Hawthorn and Madeleine Barat in Footscray; the latter was briefly affiliated with the Union.

As frequently happens, the outbreak of war turned many people's thoughts to spiritual matters; kindergartens and local committees were not exempt. Following representations from the Marie Kirk (earlier the WCTU) Kindergarten committee, the executive recommended to council that a 'simple hymn-grace should be used' in all Union kindergartens, and prayer and Bible stories at the discretion of the local committee.[39] They also recommended saluting the Flag and singing the National Anthem. The Union policy on religious observance was carefully and circumspectly spelt out by the president, Mrs Alice Creswick, in 1941. The spiritual awakening of a child, she said, had always been seen as one of the tasks of a kindergartener. Children responded to and benefited from an awareness of the beauty and mystery of God's creation. This could be achieved quite simply by nature study, walks in the park, acquaintance with baby animals, and so on, as well as by formal teaching; the object always was a development of a sense of spiritual values in a child. She concluded by stating flatly that 'the decision as to the definite religious experience given to children is a matter which is controlled by the local committees'.[40] In the following year the Loreto committee applied for permission to have 'special devotions . . . for Catholic children at the after-session'. The executive agreed to this by a majority of only two (7–5 in favour), and then passed a motion reaffirming 'the non-sectarian policy of the Union'.[41] They stated that the arrangement with Loreto was exceptional because of Loreto's long affiliation with the Union, and was not to 'be regarded as a precedent by the Executive in dealing with any new applications for affiliation which may be received in the future'.

Under a broadminded and tolerant director, Miss Kathleen Kenny, herself a devout Catholic, Loreto remained in the Union for three more years. Miss Kenny, however, evidently found her committee's requirement of formal, specifically Catholic, observance with Catholic children impossible in practice. In her letter of resignation to the Loreto committee at the end of 1945, she wrote that, though the 'unique privilege generously granted by the FKU' of making the Sign of the Cross and saying the Our Father and the first part of the Hail Mary was 'excellent in theory', it was 'disastrous in practice'. She felt that 'a personal love of God and His Mother is a very firm foundation on which to build, when the child goes to school. In a suitable atmosphere this is achieved by improvised prayers and stories'[42]. Her resignation was accepted with apparently genuine regret by her committee, and just ten days later the secretary wrote to the Union withdrawing Loreto from affiliation from the end of the year. Her letter gave generous acknowledgment of the assistance of the Union to the Loreto Kindergarten over the years, especially in the unique arrangement made for Catholic religious observance, but stated that Miss Kenny's difficulties and now the problem of a new director to replace her had led to this decision[43].

The withdrawal of Loreto was not caused directly by the state government's substitution of Health Department for Education Department as the channel of funding; had it been, Loreto could have disaffiliated 12 months earlier. But the bureaucratic change made disaffiliation possible because Loreto no longer had to depend on the Union for a share of the state government grant which church kindergartens had not previously enjoyed.

While the Union grappled with problems of finance, staff, and increasing

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demands on both College and kindergartens—new, old, and proposed—Australia remained at war and this itself placed added demands on the Union—on its staff, its executive, and its local committees. In the central Union administration itself, the coincidence in time of the establishment of the AAPSCD and the outbreak of World War II led to changes in personnel. Ada Mary a'Beckett, C.B.E., president of the Union since 1921, resigned in mid-1939 on her appointment as president of the new national organization. As educationalist, administrator, fund raiser, and source of unquenchable energy and enthusiasm, it is difficult to see how the Union could have survived, let alone expanded, without her leadership during the difficult decades when she held office. Her considerable powers she devoted in the last ten years of her life to the furthering of the national pre-school movement; she died in May 1948.

Mrs a'Beckett's successor as FKU president was Mrs H.F. Creswick, executive member since 1936, and president of the Lady Northcote Free Kindergarten Committee since 1928. Like Mrs a'Beckett, Alice Creswick was a capable and forceful leader. Unfortunately these very qualities acted to the disadvantage of the Union in time of war, because only a year after her election as president, she was appointed Principal Commandant of Red Cross Women Personnel and, though she remained president for another 18 months, Miss Mary Lush, who had served the Union in numerous capacities since its early days, acted for her, finally becoming president in name as well as in fact in September 1942. It was she who steered the Union through the war years, remaining president till Mrs Creswick was again available in July 1946.

Mary Lush's association with the Union pre-dated its formation; she worked as a voluntary helper with Maud Wilson in the Carlton Kindergarten from 1906 to 1916. Later she was its director till 1928. During this time, her book *Progressive Kindergarten Methods* was published; all proceeds were paid into Union funds. She lectured at the KTC during the first 12 years of its existence and served on the Union executive from 1937 till 1948. After her term as president she was made a life vice-president. Intelligent, willing, dedicated, and capable, hers is one of the great names in the history of the Union. She was awarded an O.B.E. in 1954 and died on 3 October 1958.[44]

At Mary Lush's side, as she had been at the side of Ada Mary a'Beckett, was Nancy Francis, a tireless, experienced, honorary secretary, who served the Union for some quarter of a century. President, secretary, and executive, of course, worked in an honorary capacity; but the days had passed when volunteers could carry on the entire day-to-day office work of the Union. A secretary and a part-time assistant were already employed; during the war a second (full-time) assistant was engaged as well. In addition the physical separation of College (in Kew) from Union offices (in the city) also necessitated additional secretarial staff. This, of course, increased overhead expenses, which, by the time the war ended, were over £3000 per annum, a sum which included the rent of the rooms in Collins Street.

Another anxiety for the Union during the war was the problem of the 'working mum'.[45] Some mothers had always worked; it was to serve them that crèches—always too few—had been devised; now it became government policy to encourage married women to work, especially in clothing and munitions factories, but generally in any jobs which would free men for the armed services. Married women with children were at no time forced to work, but the attraction of high wages and, perhaps, the companionship of bench or factory floor when one's husband was overseas or interstate, led thousands of young mothers to seek employment for themselves and, as a corollary, full day care for their children. Full-day child-minding was alien to the educational philosophy of the FKU—yet, faced with a state of national emergency and with the possibility of social, emotional, and, possibly, physical danger to pre-school children, they were bound to co-operate when the Commonwealth Government announced its sponsorship of and financial support for day care centres early in 1943.

There were never enough day care centres to meet demand; in Melbourne, for example, 'the four biggest wartime centres had waiting lists twice the size of their actual enrolments'. One reason for this is evident—the lack of a pool of trained staff for the authorities to draw on. The Union was torn between, on the one hand, its patriotic feelings and its concern for the welfare of Victoria's children, and, on the other, its entrenched belief that thorough long-term training is essential for persons undertaking professionally the care of pre-school children. In the event they compromised, offering in 1943, 1944 and 1945, a series of brief, elementary courses for Child Care Reserve Trainees, who then worked in the wartime centres[46], and later a one-year course for play leaders.[47] Simultaneously, the placing of trained kindergarteners on the 'reserved occupation' list helped retain staff who might otherwise have sought better-paid employment. The Union also provided short lecture courses for the Red Cross, similar to those on First Aid and Home Nursing, the object of which was to help Red Cross personnel who would be responsible for a group of children in the event of evacuation. The two holiday homes were offered to the government as centres, if children were evacuated from crowded city areas, but this did not become necessary, and the homes continued in their intended role for kindergarten children throughout the war. Children arriving in Victoria after evacuation from England were, however, supervised during the day by Union staff in their temporary quarters in Royal Park, before placement with their host families.[48]

Various war-time activities impinged upon the various kindergartens. The Lady Forster at Port Melbourne probably suffered most from the state of emergency; this kindergarten was closed temporarily early in 1942, but the staff remained on duty, visiting families and arranging activities for small groups of children. The kindergarten reopened in third term.[49] At Fitzroy, the crèche and kindergarten were temporarily 'fused', and a full-day program, including a mid-day meal and sleep, arranged.[50] Some kindergartens took to growing vegetables[51] as part of the war effort—which would surely have delighted Friedrich Froebel; staff learnt to grapple with stirrup pumps[52]; supervisors travelling to Ballarat and Geelong had to revert to trains as petrol rationing became more severe[53]; at Mooroolbeek, the beautiful windows were fitted with black-out curtains[54]; as refugees arrived from Asia, all kindergarten children were vaccinated[55]; staff could no longer be required to wear uniform, as clothes were subject to rationing; and knitters and sewers for the kindergartens had to receive coupons if they were to continue their voluntary efforts.[56]

One war-time development in the kindergarten world, which did not originate in Victoria but was eagerly adopted here, was the Kindergarten of the Air.[57] Started in Perth, where all kindergartens were closed for six months, the ABC pre-school session of stories, games, and music was introduced in Victoria in April 1943, under a Union-trained kindergartener, Miss Anne Dreyer. It was immediately popular, not only with pre-school children, but also with their parents; its educational, not merely its entertainment, value was quite evident, and undoubtedly, as Dr Spaull suggests in *Australian Education in the Second World War*, was one of the factors leading middle-class parents to desire kindergartens for their children.

Another direct result of World War II on kindergartens was the rapid drop in numbers and finally the disappearance of voluntary helpers.[58] When the war began, the Union's Voluntary Helpers Association had 389 members, all of whom worked regularly in Union kindergartens, though some were able to give more time than others. By early 1943 numbers had dwindled to 124 and, just before the war ended, to 96. In 1947 the Union regretfully disbanded the Association. The same economic forces which sent the mothers of kindergarten children into factories as working mums attracted the former voluntary helpers into the services, the Red Cross, or other directly war-related activities. They returned to peace-time existence either to marry and raise their own families or to seek employment in the booming post-war economy where one was paid for what one did. Their place as aides to trained staff in kindergartens was increasingly taken by young mothers whose children attended the kindergarten, and many of whom—or their husbands—were on the kindergarten committee. By 1947 we read in the supervisor's report to the education committee that at

Maidstone, Sunshine, and Spotswood these mothers did domestic work at kindergarten as well as assisting with the children; 'the Directors of these kindergartens depend almost entirely on their help'.[59]

Directors and assistants in war-time kindergartens, in addition to problems they shared with the rest of the community like brown-outs and rationing and anxiety, were faced with a problem they received secondhand from the Education Department. In previous years, children had been accepted in state schools at the age of five; the question of sub-primary teaching for which all KTC diplomates were theoretically qualified did not therefore arise. But as the Education Department lost staff because of teachers joining the services, the entry age was gradually raised to five-and-a-half and even six years—which was, after all, the statutory age at which all children had to start formal schooling.[60] There was even a suggestion that children might not be admitted until the age of seven, as a war-time emergency measure, but this did not eventuate. It is true, however, that in some crowded areas, like Burnley, many children did remain longer at kindergarten, and this added to a director's problems as such 'big' boys and girls were unsettling to the younger children, being themselves bored and the staff being rarely able to find time to introduce them to formal sub-primary work. This problem did not disappear when the war ended. State schools remained crowded, especially in new, outer suburbs; as late as 1954, Dobson Kindergarten reported many children over the age of five in its morning group; such children were 'beyond the existing equipment and . . . bored with their free-play periods'.[61]

The effects of the war on the kindergarten world were by no means all unfavourable. For one thing, poverty declined. In 1939 and 1940, medical inspections revealed not only a high but an increasing number of malnourished children.[62] In 1941, money was still being allocated to kindergartens for food and boots[63], though the Union social worker stated that 'kindergarten parents as a whole are definitely better off than before the war'.[64] In 1942, she reported her conviction 'that all parents are now in a position to make some contribution [i.e. to a hot mid-day meal] . . . and should be encouraged to do so'.[65] One reason for this was the virtual non-existence of unemployment as men were absorbed into the Forces—a difference from the World War I situation; another was the employment of many mothers; yet another was the introduction by the Commonwealth Government in 1940 of the first Child Endowment, a small sum payable to a mother of children under the age of 16.[66]

It would not be true, of course, to suggest that from, say, 1942 onwards, poverty vanished and needy children disappeared. There were, then as now, families who could not cope, and particular circumstances which were not improved by war-time prosperity; probably children's problems were less physical and more emotional during the war years when that essential element in their well-being, a secure home background, was often missing or at risk. Apart from this, however, the alleviation of one physical problem had scarcely begun when war slowed it almost to a standstill; this was the problem of adequate housing, a problem which Dr John Dale had been striving to deal with for over a decade and the Union, throughout its existence. Now the Housing Commission, spurred on by the horrific report used so effectively by Dr Norris in 1939, was starting on a long road of slum abolition and rehousing.

The Victorian Baby Health Centres Association and the Union worked together to secure the establishment of centres and kindergartens in all Housing Commission areas. The first of these Commission settlements was at Fishermen's Bend, and the Union approached the local council (Port Melbourne) and General Motors, the biggest employer in the area, to secure their financial support. At the same time they backed the efforts of the AAPSCD to secure federal and state financial backing for work with pre-school children in industrial areas. In 1942 the appropriately named Ada Mary a'Beckett Free Kindergarten was opened in a small commission cottage at Fishermen's Bend, and affiliated with the Union. It was a start; the families, uprooted and resettled in clean, weatherproof little houses, needed all the help the baby health centre sister and the Union with its trained director, assistant, and social worker could give them as they adapted to a new life in new surroundings. Immediately the Union directed its efforts to interesting local bodies in kindergartens in the Housing Commission estates at Preston and Richmond[67], but these attempts did not come to fruition till after the war.

The gradual war-time retreat of dire poverty led to a feeling among some directors and assistants and local committees that mothers should make some financial contribution to the kindergarten which served them and their families. The holiday home committee of past students asked the executive early in 1942 if they could ask for contributions from mothers; the executive replied that 'the Union has no power to enforce payment and no legal claim on Child Endowment money'.[68] There was no objection to accepting financial donations, but no fixed charge could be made. This applied to all Union kindergartens, not just to the holiday homes, and it would seem that many, perhaps most, mothers, from this time on, did pay a shilling or two a week towards their kindergartens; some, of course, could not—the Child Endowment was a very tiny sum. The trouble arose over the few who were able to contribute, or were thought to be able to do so, but did not. A group of mothers from the Lady Northcote Kindergarten at Montague wrote a letter late in 1942 complaining about this anomaly which led, they felt, to the willing supporting the greedy and irresponsible. They wanted authority to make a fixed weekly charge, and the deletion of the word 'free' from their name.[69] The executive asked the director to explain that this could not be done as the terms of the government grant precluded subsidized kindergartens from charging fees.

The whole philosophy of the Union, however, of its executive and local committees, of its own trained staff, and of its social workers, favoured self-help; thrift and responsibility were qualities the Union had stressed from the beginning. Generosity to the needy and helpless was one thing, and the Union's inter-war record proves how much devoted people would give where they saw need; but hand-outs to those who could help themselves were quite another matter. There is no doubt that from the time of World War II onwards contributions have been sought, until today all parents pay—if they can; a necessitous case is always considered indulgently by a director and contributions may be waived; but such cases are the exception.

The inclusion of a Pre-School Section in the Maternal and Infant Welfare Division of the Health Department in 1944, and the payment of the government grant via that Department, led the Union executive to rethink and restate its position.[70] Miss Lush pointed out to the executive that 'while the policy of the FKU had, of necessity, been restricted to the provision of kindergartens for under-privileged children, the Health Department was prepared to subsidise kindergartens to embrace all children, irrespective of the financial position of parents.' The pro rata subsidy, based on enrolment figures, which the Health Department was prepared to pay to new and existing kindergartens, would come to the Union to be distributed to its kindergartens; local committees would as usual be responsible for making good the inevitable gap between subsidy and costs; municipalities were expected to help kindergartens in their areas. Miss Lush felt that 'the time had come when the FKU must be prepared to sanction a more comprehensive interpretation of the word "free" to embrace all children'—more comprehensive, indeed; some might say 'misleading'. However, the executive took Miss Lush's point well enough and passed a motion:

> This Executive welcomes the Government policy to stimulate the formation of Nursery Kindergarten Pre-School Centres to be available to all children, and recognise that it is no longer necessary to restrict the interpretation of the word 'free' in its constitution to the formation of centres only for the children of parents of low incomes in the industrial areas.

What had happened was, in fact, that the kindergarten was no longer seen by a large section of the better-off part of society as essentially a philanthropic institution. The economically, socially, and educationally superior classes were now recognizing the social and educational value of kindergartens, and desired them for their own children. They were also able and willing to pay for what they wanted.

Groups of young parents from the 'outer circle', from Brighton round to Balwyn and beyond, initiated their own kindergartens, becoming their own local committees; their own contributions, together with the Health Department subsidy and financial assistance from their municipality, enabled them to build, equip, maintain, and staff them. The result was a huge increase in the number of kindergartens in Victoria at the end of and after World War II. Peter Spearritt in his perceptive survey, Child Care and Kindergartens in Australia, 1890–1975, remarks on the rapidity of the spread of pre-school centres in Victoria, compared with the slow growth in other States. He attributes this, to a great extent, to the fact that it was the Health Department in Victoria, not the Education Department as in other States, which subsidized pre-school centres, and that the Victorian Health Department acted through local committees. This ensured a high degree of autonomy for the committees and for the voluntary organizations, like the FKU, with which many of them were affiliated. Victorian parents, eager to develop local kindergartens, were not deterred by fear that their kindergartens might be subject to control or pressure from the Education Department.

In 1945 the Health Department figures gave the number of kindergartens in Victoria as 76 and the number of children attending as 4095[71]; of these, over half, 43, were Union kindergartens, and over half the children, 2433, attended Union kindergartens.[72] The rest were church or independent kindergartens which did not provide their own training facilities. The departmental subsidy and the increasing demand for pre-school education ensured that the number of kindergartens and therefore the demand for trained kindergarteners would increase. So, logically, the next chapter must trace the great expansion of the KTC to meet this rising demand for professional pre-school teachers.

Chapter 7

Snakes and Ladders—The College to 1957

One year after the end of World War II, there were 85 subsidized kindergartens in Victoria[1]; 43 of these, just over half, were affiliated with the Union. Ten years later there were 231 kindergartens in receipt of the departmental subsidy[2]—49 of them, less than a quarter, were Union kindergartens.[3]

This dual development—the great increase in the number of kindergartens and play-centres and the proportional decline in the number of Union kindergartens—dominates the history of the pre-school movement here in the post-war period. Inextricably connected with this huge expansion of kindergartens is the fact that in 1955 as in 1946 (and indeed in 1926) all kindergarten teachers were trained at the Kindergarten Training College at Mooroolbeek in Kew, and that this College, founded by the Union, was still owned and controlled by the Union and was their financial responsibility.

It was therefore of supreme importance, if kindergarten work were to continue at standards acceptable to the Union, that the College should increase its output of diplomates. For 40 years, pre-school enthusiasts had longed for just such a forward surge in the gospel of early childhood development as occurred in the post-war era. Now that it was upon them, now that local committees, churches, and municipalities, taking advantage of the government subsidy, were opening ten or twenty new kindergartens a year, could the Union's training facilities be geared up quickly enough and sufficiently to staff them?

The Union was not taken by surprise at the end of the war. It had been apparent since 1942 and effective since 1944 that the entry of the Health Department into the pre-school field, with its per capita grants for approved kindergartens, would make possible the dormant desire of many non-union groups to start kindergartens. Since 1939, when there were only 38 students in training[4], great efforts, stimulated by a few scholarships, had been made to increase their numbers.

Nor was the Health Department unaware of the potential problem of staffing kindergartens. As early as November 1943, before the Pre-School Section was added to the Maternal and Infant Division of the Maternal and Child Hygiene Branch, the Department had called a conference of representatives of organizations concerned with pre-school children to discuss 'the best mode of procedure . . . to meet the public demand for improved, enlightened management of children of pre-school age, especially in relation to group care'.[5] The conference agreed that the problem was too wide for voluntary organizations to tackle alone, and that both Education and Health Departments 'had direct responsibilities'. Amongst other subjects dealt with was the question of providing pre-school teachers: Dr Featonby, Chief Health Officer, stated that any extension of pre-school work 'will require a very great increase in the number of properly qualified personnel and that one of the urgent and pressing needs is for an extension of the training facilities for such personnel'.

'Training facilities' meant the KTC, and the Union was well aware of its responsibility. Already, in February 1943, they had appointed Miss Madeline Crump as College vice-principal[6], and had used some of their federal grant to provide two student bursaries. The Union's education committee recognized the wisdom of using money from the Commonwealth Government in this way, rather than directly for the establishment or maintenance of kindergartens, saying that 'the needs of the College [are] of paramount importance since the provision of more trained teachers is essential'.[7] The separation of the position of Union supervisor from that of College principal took place also in 1943—a sign that training was recognized as a full-time undertaking in its own right, distinct from the supervision of kindergartens.

The facilities of the College at Kew, however, were limited, and so were the applicants for places there; undergraduate numbers rose from 38 at the beginning of the war to 63 in 1944 and 72 in 1945[8], but this was only a fraction of what was required. In 1944, Miss Lush recognized this when she urged the Union to consider carefully any new requests from kindergartens to affiliate as the Union 'seemed to have reached the limit of [its] resources with the staff at [its] disposal'.[9] The Health Department recognized this too: Dr Scantlebury-Brown wrote that 'about 20 nursery kindergarten students graduate each year. This is a totally inadequate number. At least 100 such students should graduate yearly to meet present requirements'.[10] She thought the state should assume responsibility for training pre-school teachers, but agreed that for the present the best way was for the Health Department to provide bursaries to cover fees and books, with a living allowance. She recommended 19 such bursaries. In fact, it was not till 1948 that the departmental bursaries actually materialized—and then there were only five of them.[11] At that stage, the voluntary organizations and other outside donors were providing 26 bursaries, including 14 from the Church of England and 11 from the Presbyterians; both churches had initiated their scholarship schemes in 1944. The large number of scholarships offered by the Church of England is evidence of the vigour of Win Griffiths in building up and raising the standards of Anglican kindergartens. By the early 1950s, when both Anglicans and Presbyterians had established a nucleus of Union-trained kindergarteners, the number of bursaries dropped to three from each church.

Mooroolbeek was still used for residence as well as for all lectures and tutorials; its physical size militated against expansion, and the old house had been amended, adapted, and patched up over the years. One example was recorded in executive minutes in May 1944: Miss Lush inspected the College basement, following heavy rain, and found it 'inches deep in water'. Madeline Crump, by then principal, stressed the need for College extension in her 1945 report:

> To meet the very great demands of the community for more and more trained pre-school teachers it is imperative that we should immediately begin to plan for a new College large enough to cater for the training of many times the number of students who are enrolled at present. The present building is entirely inadequate to meet the needs of the 90–100 students who are using its facilities now . . . and the work of the College must go on growing and developing.[12]

In 1944 the residential quarters were 'filled to capacity with 21 students'; in 1945, three had to be boarded out locally; alterations in that year provided accommodation in the hostel for 27 students in 1946, 'another eight being billeted with near neighbours'.[13] But the increase in student numbers meant intolerable pressure on teaching facilities. At the end of 1944, the Education Department offered the College space for lecture and common rooms at Faraday Street in Carlton, but the Union independently declined the offer.[14] They were, in fact, developing plans for a new lecture block at Mooroolbeek and for additional residential accommodation.[15] This plan, drawn up by the College Council and approved by the Union, catered for from 180 to 200 students. Alas, the application for a building permit was refused[16]; in the immediate post-war period, with building materials in short supply, permits were being given for the building of houses only. At the end of 1946, with an 'unprecedented' number of applications from country girls to train in 1947, the Union executive resolved to ask if some prefabricated huts no longer in use at the

Ada Mary a'Beckett Kindergarten could be transported to Kew and used for accommodation.[17] Happily at this stage, Mrs Creswick, the Union president, had a satisfactory interview with the Premier, Mr John Cain, and a building permit was granted.[18]

The new wing—called appropriately the Alice Creswick Wing—was not built overnight, and for two years (1946 and 1947) while the old house was used almost exclusively for residence and administration, KTC lectures were given in the hall of the Kew Congregational Church.[19] This building was naturally not suitable for such an unintended purpose and, in addition, was between one and two miles away from Mooroolbeek; conditions for staff and students must have been trying, to say the least. Yet this remained the only training centre for pre-school teachers in Victoria. The Union received from the government, via the Health Department, £5000 for the new building, and £2500 for maintenance costs at Mooroolbeek.[20] In the same year (1946) the Department ensured the increasing spread of pre-school centres and therefore the rise in demand for kindergarten teachers by raising the per capita grant for kindergartens from £4 to £6.[21] The Union accepted philosophically, perhaps proudly, the demand for their graduates, many of whom were now being appointed to non-union kindergartens—inevitably, as those on scholarships from churches or municipalities were naturally required to serve in their centres for some years after graduating.

The Union was also concerned not only to maintain but to raise its standards, announcing in July 1947 that the third year's training was henceforth to include far more theoretical work[22], a change from the previous position when third-year students spent only one afternoon a week in College and the rest of their time on practical work—that is, acting as unpaid assistants in kindergartens! Their concern with standards, however, received a nasty blow in November of that year when the Health Department announced a decision that any state-qualified sub-primary or even primary teacher was to be regarded as qualified to take the post of director in any subsidized kindergarten.[23] The Department's Director of Maternal, Infant and Pre-School Child Welfare, Dr Barbara Meredith, who had succeeded Dr Scantlebury-Brown, intimated that this was not a short-term measure to cope with a period of teacher scarcity, but was now departmental policy. Not only did this decision seem to the Union to threaten standards, as some primary teachers had only one year's training with 5- to 10-year-olds, and no experience in parent education, but it also seemed a potential threat to the whole College training course, which was now a full three years and required the payment of fees—at that time, as for many years past, £7/7/- per term.

The Department's decision is understandable. By their action they had aided and hastened the spread of kindergartens throughout the State; they could not now leave them in the charge of totally untrained non-professionals; the KTC could not, at the time, meet the demand for its graduates; the Education Department was therefore the sole resource left to its sister department. At the same time, it may be argued that the Health Department saw pre-school work as a health rather than as an educational affair, that the niceties of theories of child development may not have impinged much upon its staff, oriented towards medicine and nursing. Even Vera Scantlebury-Brown, in what must have been one of her last productions, a departmental pamphlet on *Pre-School Centres—Play Centres*, published in the year of her death, leaned heavily towards the health rather than the educational side of pre-school work. Only in her final sentence did she deign a nod towards education: 'The giving of good play opportunities must result in a happier childhood for our children, because of the educational significance of the children's play'.[24]

In 1948, with the new lecture block in use and a full house at the hostel, KTC enrolments reached 153[25]—a figure not to be attained again for ten years; of these students, 74 were on bursaries. Both the Union and the Health Department knew that even this record number was nowhere near sufficient to close the widening gap between supply and demand; the Union in a submission to the Department estimated the shortage of trained kindergarteners in Victoria at 340.[26] Dr Meredith, suggesting that at least 200 graduates a year were required to meet present and future likely needs, said that the Victorian Government should assume responsibility for training[27]; Mrs Creswick, speaking for the Union at a deputation to the Premier, estimated that, of 130 000 eligible children in Victoria, only 5000 were receiving any pre-school training; she urged an increased government subsidy to the College to enable it to increase its facilities and output.[28]

Dr C.R. Merrilees, the Chief Medical Officer who had succeeded Dr Featonby, saw the matter in a different light. To him, the problem was not the Health Department and its inadequate financial aid to the College nor the College with its (still) restricted facilities; the problem to his mind was the Union itself. The realm of pre-school care, he believed, was 'in a vicious circle' because the College 'unfortunately is controlled by the FKU and, apart from scholarship trainees, all the graduates are absorbed by Kindergarten Union centres which makes prospective centres join the FKU in order to function at all, thus adding to the strength of the Union, and so on'.[29]

One hopes it would be hard to find a better example of muddled thinking from a highly placed official. In the first place, in 1948 very nearly 50 per cent (74 out of 153) of College students were on scholarships only five of which were provided by his department, and were not therefore 'absorbed by FKU centres'. In the second place, many experienced College graduates of former years (9 out of 20 staff resignations in the previous year[30]) moved from Union to non-union kindergartens. In the third place, the number of Union kindergartens had increased by one since 1946, while other kindergartens had increased by 80. However, on the basis of his own fallacious reasoning, Merrilees came to the conclusion that 'the present set up is extravagant and unjust', that a few more bursaries might perhaps be offered as a temporary measure, but that no money should be given for further extensions to the College and that as soon as possible it should be taken over by the Department.

Merrilees's remarkable memorandum did produce one good result; on the advice of Dr Meredith, an Investigator of Pre-School Training was appointed to produce a report on the basis of which Merrilees and Meredith could make recommendations to the Minister. The Investigator—who was given three bare months for the job—was Miss Helen Paul, former kindergarten student, director, and supervisor, principal of the College, and Director of Pre-School Studies for the Union, and also, briefly, Pre-School Education Officer with the Health Department (1945–46). Miss Paul produced, by the end of July 1948, a report which even the choleric Dr Merrilees described as 'excellent'. This is difficult to assess now, as the relevant departmental file contains no copy of the 39-page report—though there are assorted comments on it[31]; but it would seem more than likely, knowing the background and intellectual capacity of the author, that on this occasion Dr Merrilees's judgment was sound.

Drs Meredith and Merrilees disagreed on the recommendations which each based on Paul's report—a sure pointer to its impartiality. Merrilees seized on the report's stress on pre-school *education* to question whether a teacher training institution had any place in a health department. He was clearly terrified of the strain and expense which would be involved for his department if it attempted, itself, to implement a long-range policy of pre-school teacher training. The Education Department, he remarked, seemed a more suitable authority; and an outsider would be bound to admit that theoretically this seems the obvious, common-sense view.

Dr Meredith, on the other hand, wished the Health Department to be the ultimate authority; she felt that the solution was some arrangement, whereby the College Council would be broadened to include representatives of both Education and Health Departments, and on which voluntary bodies, especially the Union, which she acknowledged as being co-operative, would be represented.[32] In the meantime, with an increase in departmental bursaries from five to fifteen in 1949[33], and with no further action from the Minister of Health except the pious platitude that 'children are one of the crops that never fail, but the harvesters are too few'[34], the situation continued as before.

Nevertheless the year 1948, in retrospect, can be seen as a momentous one in the annals of kindergarten teacher training. Merrilees and Meredith were not alone in realizing that the magnitude of this task required government action. As early as February, before Miss Paul's report, Mrs Creswick had said bluntly to the Minister of Health that the Union's aim of turning out 100 graduates a year from its KTC was 'only a palliative', and that eventually pre-school teacher training 'must become the responsibility of the government'.[35] She also stated that the Union 'believed in training being free and undertaken by the State, provided our standards are maintained'.

Meanwhile, at Mooroolbeek, 1949 brought its own problems. Perhaps not unexpected were the continuing domestic[36] and financial difficulties of the hostel; for the second successive year the Health Department felt impelled to step in and help with the overdraft, providing £500 in 1948, £1000 in 1949[37]; they could scarcely do otherwise as the hostel was full of country girls training to staff country kindergartens whose foundation had been made possible by the Health Department's subsidy. Unexpected, however, was the decline in the number of student enrolments; reasons for this were easily found after the event, but the event had not been predicted. From 153 in 1948, the total number of students in 1949 fell by 30 to 123; particularly disturbing was the drop in first-year enrolments from 53 to 23.[38] The decline occurred despite the increase in the number of departmental bursaries to 15; overall bursaries were 71; and for the first time fee-paying students were fewer than those receiving assistance. Seeking for reasons, the Union president noted that that year's 18-year-old first-year students were drawn from the low birth-rate year of 1931; she noted, too, that many new, interesting, well-paid professions were opening up for the young female[39]; both factors doubtless had some effect, but it seems evident that a more influential cause in the decline in student enrolments was the monetary value of the bursaries offered.

Throughout the year, the Minister of Health (that is, his harassed department) was bombarded with letters pointing this out[40]: letters from kindergarten committees and the AAPSCD; from committees eager to start pre-school centres; from church groups and municipalities; letters from city and country. All asked for an increase, not for fees and books, for these were covered, but in the living allowance provided. Too many figures only clutter a text: the following will, however, make the point.[41] In June 1949, allowances gazetted for student teachers in the Victorian Education Department were: in first year, £169 if the student lived at home, and £195 if boarding away from home; by third year these students received £182 and £208 respectively. The living allowances paid by the Health Department to pre-school trainees were £52 for those at home and £104 for those living away from home; they did not increase with a student's seniority. Comment is superfluous.

To do justice to the Health Department and its officers, one must point out that over many years they did urge on the government the desirability of an increase in the living allowance of the pre-school student teacher. Thus, in 1949, the Maternal and Child Hygiene Branch recommended an increase to £182 per annum[42], and in 1950 urged living allowances virtually the same as those of Education Department trainees.[43] Dr Meredith, of course, was vitally concerned with the output of pre-school graduates: it was she who had the task of providing staff for kindergartens not under the auspices of one of the voluntary bodies. Thus, in 1950, she wrote that 'increased amounts will have to be paid if the Department is to induce girls to train for pre-school work'; while, in 1951, urging an increase in the number—not the amount, here—of bursaries, she said that this was 'essential for the maintenance of *existing* pre-school activities'.[44] The number of scholarships had, in fact, been increased to 20 in 1950—but, as if to underline the truth of the claims in all the letters on the subject received by the Department, student numbers had fallen once again; this year there were only 121, though happily first-year enrolments were up by 12 from 1949.[45] The total number of students *not* receiving financial aid was now less than half the total on bursaries—38 out of 83.

In these circumstances of unequal competition for students with the Education Department, the College battled on.[46] In an effort to make the Education Department's sub-primary students more familiar with the child development theories and practice of the KTC, it offered practical work to several sub-primary trainees. In response to hints from the Education Department that KTC academic standards left something to be desired, the College amended its curriculum. In an effort to give to non-union kindergarten groups a share in the planning of training programs, it gave representatives of church kindergartens a place on the College Council. But the fact that the enlarged KTC had facilities for 189 students while, in 1951, only 107 were enrolled, must have been depressing.[47]

If the College principal and Council, and the Union supervisor and education committee were depressed, the Health Department was angry as well. In 1951 the government increased its grant to the College, but as Dr Meredith wrote warmly to the Chief Health Officer: 'Unless some further provision in the value of scholarships is made this year, the amount already given by the government towards capital expenditure will . . . have accomplished no useful purpose'.[48] In October of the same year, the Health Department Secretary, W.L. Rowe, wrote bluntly that government money was being wasted.[49] The funds provided for facilities at the College, and the £ for £ grants which his department now gave for the building of new kindergartens, were of no value, he felt, if there were insufficient kindergarteners to use the facilities or to staff the kindergartens. In particular, he protested that more money was being provided for Hospitals and Charities Commission bursaries, but less for Health Department bursaries; this, he said, penalized preventive medicine in favour of curative medicine. These two protests bore some fruit; the Treasurer, traditional bogey of all government departments, relented and provided sufficient funds (an additional £3000) for Health Department bursaries to be kept at their existing number and value.[50]

The financial position of the College was desperate; the government grant had risen to £10 000 for the next financial year; nevertheless the Council saw no hope of making its inevitable overdraft even faintly respectable unless it raised fees—the only other major source of income.[51] Fees which since pre-war days had stood at £7/7/- a term were therefore raised to £10/10/-, and at the same time hostel fees were increased from £2/5/- to £3/3/- a week. This move failed to make the residential section of Mooroolbeek financially viable, and the Union closed it at the end of 1952[52]; the considerable space made available by the absence of resident students was converted to teaching and library facilities. No diminution of students resulted from the closure: indeed, in 1953 student numbers rose to 123; country girls found board in assorted young women's hostels widely used before the days of 'digs' and 'flatting'.

The closing of Mooroolbeek as a residential hostel marked the end of an era; the 'boarders' had, in years past, been in one sense the nucleus of the student body, and their 'home' the centre of student activities. It was at Mooroolbeek that the original Past Students' Association had been born, and at Mooroolbeek that they had dreamed and realized their vision of a holiday home for poor inner city children. Now the old house was a training centre only; daily students came and talked, learnt and laughed; but nightly they departed.

This break with the past, however, seems to have shocked the Health Department into a suddenly more acute awareness of the fact that all was not well in the pre-school training world. The time of stopping a hole in the dyke while the waves of financial disaster beat outside was over. If the Union had felt impelled to take this unhappy action, the crisis must indeed be a real one. Suppose that, after a year or two, they elected to close the training section of Mooroolbeek too? This dire, and indeed unimaginable, prospect could not be contemplated without disquiet. If the Union could not cope (and its 1953 Annual Report was to say openly that 'our very existence is precarious'[53]) whence would come the small, but essential, and potentially larger number of diplomates which the Health Department needed to staff the 150 kindergartens it was now subsidizing?

The Health Department was not a monolith; it spoke with many voices. Its Secretary, Rowe, and its Chief Health Officer, now Dr Kevin Brennan, took an overall view; they were, inevitably, only too well aware of *all* the responsibilities of the Department. At branch level, Dr Meredith, too, had many concerns, maternal and infant welfare being foremost among them. But it was her responsibility to staff kindergartens, and though departmental policy was to accept state-trained primary teachers as suitable directors for kindergartens, she knew and acknowledged that this was a policy of desperation, that the nature of their training made them 'only second best'[54]. This difference in outlook is important if we are to understand the developments of the next four years.

In October 1952, immediately they had been informed and had realized the implications of the closure of the hostel, the Health Department held a conference[55]—one might almost call it a council of war. To it, a representative of the Education Department was invited, but the Union was not represented nor the AAPSCD. It was a conference of senior public servants. Rowe stated that the Union, telling him of the impending closure of the hostel and reiterating the sorry financial plight of the College, had expressed a wish that the Department should manage the KTC, but that the Union 'should retain some control'. Rowe confessed that his Department was 'stymied'—a rather engaging confession, but not really surprising; to any unbiased observer a Health Department does not leap to mind as the obvious authority to run an educational institution. He therefore asked the Education Department representative if it were possible, within the structure of his department, for the KTC to be absorbed. The answer was a guarded affirmative; the Education Department's School for Deaf Children was cited as a possible model, being within the Department, yet having an advisory council; a similar arrangement with the KTC should satisfy the Union that it would still exercise at the very least some influence over training, especially standards.

After a three-week break for consideration and discussion with people 'in the field', the conference resumed, this time without Education Department representation. It now appeared that what had evidently seemed to Rowe and Brennan a simple, obvious solution was not acceptable to the Maternal and Infant Welfare Branch. It was opposed most strongly by Miss E.M. Stubbs, a Union kindergartener and now Chief Pre-School Supervisor in the Branch, and by Dr Meredith, the Director. Miss Stubbs made four points: firstly, if training were under Education Department control and kindergartens under Health Department control, there would inevitably be division and friction.

How could one department train people for another? Secondly: the whole Education Department structure was unsuited to the individual approach of kindergartens and the vital contribution of local committees. Thirdly: the 'total growth'—physical, emotional, social, and intellectual—of a young child was not the approach of the Education Department which was essentially concerned with a child's intellectual development. Fourthly: the Education Department was not sufficiently flexible, and flexibility was essential in kindergarten work. Strangely, she did not mention work with parents and families, always stressed as vital for the good kindergartener.

Dr Meredith agreed that trained kindergarteners were indeed far better at their jobs than Education Department teachers who were not trained to work with the 'under fives'. But her argument was based on a medical rather than an educational approach. What she wanted was for training to be in the hands of the Health Department, but to a far greater degree than was presently the case, with the Union still in control of the KTC. She also stated that, if Health Department trained kindergarteners had the same status as Education Department staff, then both they and the pre-school children would benefit.[56]

Rowe, therefore, finding he had not carried with him the relevant members of his department in his superficially simple solution to the problem of pre-school teacher training, called another conference[57], this time including representatives of the Union and the College. These were: Mrs Ethel Southey, Union President, Mrs Margaret Macneil, Convener of the Union education committee, Mr W.A.K. a'Beckett, financial adviser, Miss Heather Lyon, Principal of the College, and G.L. Browne, Professor of Education in the University of Melbourne and Chairman of the College Council. This conference agreed to the setting up of a Pre-School Child Development Consultative Committee to advise the Minister of Health on the problem and future of pre-school training. The composition of this Council is interesting[58], and enables one virtually to forecast what its main recommendations would be. Of its eleven voting members, possibly as many as nine were drawn from the field of education ('possibly' because four of the nine were to be nominated by the AAPSCD and represented voluntary organizations concerned with child care as well as with pre-school education). Of the six non-voting advisory members, two were appointed by the Education Department, three by the Health Department, and the sixth was the College principal.

Mrs Southey called a meeting of the Union executive to explain these developments to them[59]; she said, very sensibly, that the Health Department was spending a great deal of money on the College, and it was only reasonable for them to want to greater share in its control. From the Union angle, it was and had for some time been clear that 'the College was getting beyond the scope of a voluntary body'. She herself was however 'not convinced that the Health Department was the appropriate body to take over'. The Executive evidently agreed with her, and she, with Mrs Macneil, Mr a'Beckett, Miss Lyon, and Professor Browne were authorized to continue to act for the Union in this matter.

There was considerable behind-scenes activity during the early months of 1953. Professor Browne and Dr K.S. Cunningham, vice-chairman of the College Council, pulled assorted strings. Browne wrote to Rowe at the Health Department[60] attempting, evidently, to neutralize his attitude, and if possible gain his co-operation, should the Consultative Council recommend the Education Department as the proper authority to administer the KTC. 'Within the Education Department', he suggested, the College could 'broaden the scope and extent of its work'. He hastened to dispel any intention to end the Health Department's concern with the physical well-being of young children, but urged that their educational activities 'should be in the hands of skilled educationalists'. The salaries and status of pre-school teachers and the bursaries to students would also rise, he felt, under the aegis of the Education Department. Rowe's reply was very careful[61]; he expressed no views of his own as the matter was sub judice—meaning that the Consultative Council had not yet submitted its report—but he promised that his advice to the Minister would 'not be coloured by considerations of personal prestige', and that his Department would co-operate fully if it were decided to hand the College over to the Education Department.

Dr Cunningham, meanwhile, turned his attention to the Education Department where his old friend from army education days, Major-General A.H. Ramsay, was now Director. Ramsay assured Cunningham that there should be no difficulty in fitting the KTC into the structure of his Department, either as one of its several teachers colleges—a possibility he did not personally recommend since there was in such institutions no room for any advisory council—or, his preferred alternative, on the model of one of the council-controlled technical schools.[62] In either case, pre-school teachers would be members of the state teaching service, and would enjoy its salaries and superannuation scheme. Ramsay felt that there should be no difficulty in the Union having adequate representation on the Council of such a departmental college; the College would however be financially supported by the government, via the Education Department.

All this was faithfully reported back to the Union executive in May 1953, by the sub-committee.[63] They had toyed with the idea of asking the University of Melbourne to take over pre-school training, incorporating it in some way in its Diploma of Education course, but this was not feasible as the College entrance qualification was Leaving (i.e. fifth form or Year 11 standard) not Matriculation (i.e. HSC or Year 12 standard). The Education Department, they reported, had however agreed to 'consider favourably' taking over the College. The sub-committee did not make 'any definite recommendation' but clearly favoured the Education Department rather than the Health Department because, firstly, more autonomy would be possible for the College, and secondly, because a department concerned with teacher training seemed the appropriate place for a teacher training institution.

All this seems a far cry from the Union's intransigence in the days of Dr Smyth and Miss Pye, when they had rejected any connection with the Education Department and gone out into the wilderness alone. But, then, many things had changed in the intervening 40 years.

The executive, acting on its sub-committee's advice, agreed that the Union Council should be asked to approve the transfer of the KTC, and financial responsibility for it, to the Education Department. They all realized that the College, founded so bravely 40 years before and providing, over those years, cheaply and efficiently such an essential service, had now grown, as Mrs Macneil said 'beyond the capacity of the Union'.

The Union Council meeting of 9 June 1953 was, to judge from the full and careful minutes, one of the largest ever held, and discussion and debate were of a high quality.[64] Opposition to the executive's proposal came from Mrs Nancy Francis, one of the few surviving members of the early Mooroolbeek days; she was not in favour of training under any government department and, as the University of Melbourne would not accept the College, she favoured increased efforts to raise the necessary funds voluntarily. But it was pointed out that some £30 000 a year for maintenance (not to mention rising inflation) was far too large a sum to expect from the public on a regular basis. Some other members were alarmed at the possibility of *their* College 'falling into the hands' of a government department; one could never trust governments or their minions; clearly the old suspicion of 'they' opposed to 'us', of public bodies as opposed to private enterprise, still flourished; in particular, probably because of the Union's past history, there was suspicion of the Education Department. Mrs Southey and Mrs Macneil spoke several times seeking to allay such fears, Mrs Southey stressing that, after numerous discussions with the Health Department, she had become increasingly convinced that the College had no place there, that the Education Department now, if not in 1916, was its appropriate home. Mrs Southey also held out an attractive carrot to the Council, saying that, without the heavy financial responsibility of the College, the Union might be able to provide more funds for pre-school student bursaries. The majority of local committee representatives approved the executive's motion, which was also supported by Miss Lyon and, in a letter, by Miss Mary Lush then a venerable and most respected senior Union vice-president. Finally, with some negative votes (the number is not recorded), the FKU Council agreed:

> On the general principle that the administration of teacher training is a normal function of an education authority, the Free Kindergarten Union of Victoria resolves that the Education Department be asked to undertake the administration of the College and assume financial responsibility and further resolves that the College Council, with the addition of any necessary representatives from the Education Department, be allowed to retain as far as possible its present status.

The Union communicated its decision to the Health Department, giving its reasons that 'teacher training is a normal function of an education authority' and that the 'Education Department would allow greater autonomy for the College Council' than the Health Department.[65] There the matter rested, while the Consultative Committee prepared its preliminary report. This appeared in August and recommended, to no one's surprise, that the administration of pre-school teacher training should be taken over by the Education Department and continue at the KTC at Mooroolbeek in Kew. The College should be modelled, as Ramsay had proposed, on the council-controlled technical schools.[66] This recommendation was unanimous, but Rowe, in a covering letter to his Minister stated that predictably Dr Meredith, who sat as an observer and consultant only, did not agree with it.[67]

Government wheels grind slowly. The final report of the Consultative Committee appeared in October 1954[68], but it was December 1955 before the Minister of Education informed his colleague the Minister of Health that his Department would 'be happy to take over administrative control' of the KTC 'at the earliest practicable date'.[69] The Union's difficulties in continuing the administration and financing of the College during these two years (1953-55) may be imagined; they even had to enquire to which department they should send their estimates when applying for their state budget allocation.[70] A change of government in mid-1955 did not expedite matters. Early in 1956, however, the Union was informed that the College grant was to be paid, as from 1 July that year, via the Education Department.[71] Surely this was the beginning of the end.

In the Health Department, where early in 1955 L.P. Yeatman had replaced Rowe as Secretary[72], the Pre-School Division concentrated its efforts on striving to retain in its hands the awarding of bursaries to pre-school trainees.[73] Dr Meredith's endeavours are quite understandable. She was required to staff country kindergartens, and she had adopted the sensible practice of granting a bursary to a prospective student from, say, Bendigo or Wodonga, if she knew that a kindergarten existed or was planned there which would require a director. The student, on completion of her course, would then be allocated to that centre. The trouble was, of course, that bursaries were inadequate and that, while they remained so far below the value of Education Department grants, it was—from the point of view of boosting numbers of pre-school graduates—of little consequence which department administered and financed the College. Brennan, the Chief Health Officer, supported Meredith's view, writing in 1956:

> [Meredith] would prefer to hand full responsibility of kindergartens [by which he evidently meant their staffing] over to the Department of Education rather than to retain the responsibility for this service without any opportunity of directing scholarship holders to fill essential positions.

These were strong words, considering how hostile the Pre-School Division was to the introduction of the Education Department. This determination of the Health Department to keep bursaries in its own hands must have been a blow to the Union, to the AAPSCD, and indeed to all concerned with pre-school education. They had, mistakenly it now transpired, counted on the Education Department connection not only to make higher salaries and superannuation available to pre-school teachers, but also to provide living allowances such as would attract more students.

Indeed, 1956 was an anxious time for the Union; true, their grant via the Education Department was now assured, but nothing else had happened; the Union, a small voluntary body, was still in charge of the KTC. The executive even hinted to the Union Council in September that 'there was a reluctance on the part of the present Minister of Education to take action'.[74] As it turned out, some action, which appeared decisive at the time, was taken. Late in the year, Miss Olive Dodd, who had recently succeeded Mrs Southey as Union president, reported to the executive that the necessary legislation authorizing the take-over of the administrative control of the College by the Education Department had passed both Houses of the State Parliament and had received the Royal Assent.[75] The decisiveness of this legislative action was, however, illusory. In June 1957—that is four and a half years after Mrs Southey's subcommittee had been summoned to the Health Department—Miss Dodd and other Union representatives waited on the Premier, The Honourable Henry Bolte, to discuss implementation of the legislation.[76] They were told that it was a matter for Cabinet decision and that no answer could be expected before August; in fact it was November before word was received by the Union that the 'government was not prepared to alter administrative control at the present time'.[77]

There is some evidence that this unwelcome outcome may not have been altogether unexpected, that the Premier's unwillingness to take over the KTC may have been rumoured unofficially 'by bush telegraph' even before Miss Dodd and her deputation waited on Mr Bolte. As early as April 1957, Mr W.A.K. a'Beckett remarked in an executive meeting that, with £15 000 from government, 'it should be possible to run the College'[78]—an activity which the executive fondly believed was soon to be no longer their concern. He went on to ask what would be their reply if 'the Premier suggested increasing the grant to £20 000 with the Union continuing to be responsible'. Executive unanimously declared that this suggestion 'would not be acceptable since it was the total responsibility which was beyond a voluntary body'.

Now, however, the government grant to the College *was* in fact raised from £15 000 to £20 000, and with this inducement (and no alternative) the Union was obliged to continue administering and taking responsibility for the College. To use a metaphor from a children's game: the Union, having spent a decade climbing laboriously up ladders to square 99, now found itself precipitately back on square 1.

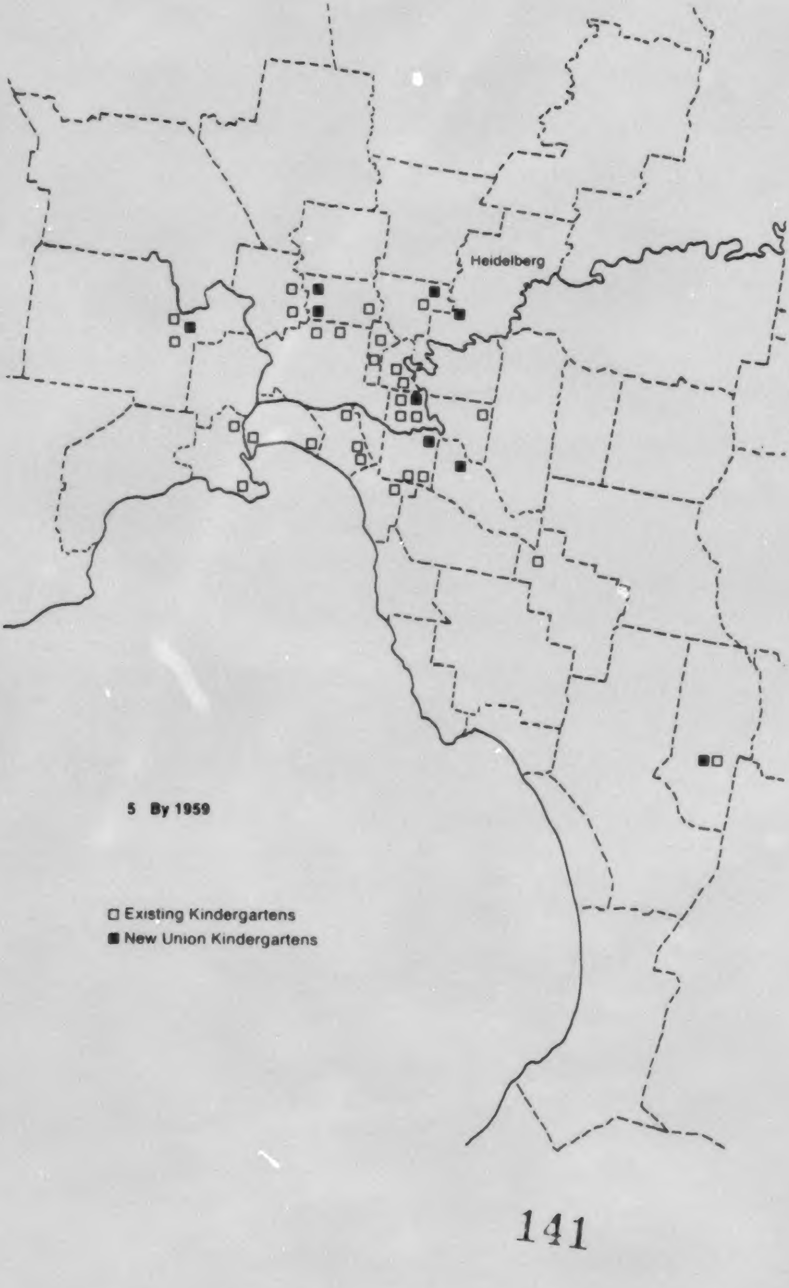
Chapter 8

War's End to Jubilee 1949-59

In the mid-1940s, with the end of World War II, the pre-school movement in Victoria entered an exciting period of expansion, coupled with frustration. The biggest single cause of the frustration—the inability to train sufficient pre-school teachers to satisfy the demand—has already been examined. Other frustrations will be examined in this chapter, but first we need to consider the expansion of Union kindergartens until the end of the 1950s when the Union celebrated its jubilee.

In 1945 there were 43 Union kindergartens in Victoria; in 1959 there were 53. This does not mean that only ten new kindergartens were affiliated with the Union, for in the same period eight kindergartens ended their affiliation; that is, there were 18 new Union kindergartens—precisely half were country kindergartens and half metropolitan.[1] The country kindergartens—extending from Mildura (1944) in the far north-west of the state to Mt Beauty, the State Electricity Commission settlement, in the mountainous north-east, and from Bairnsdale in Gippsland to Colac in the Western District and Horsham in the Wimmera—were to present the Union supervisors with a tremendous challenge and a greatly increased workload. The spread of the movement to the country where, before World War II, the Union had been confined to Ballarat and Geelong, was however a great source of satisfaction. The gift of a car from the Silver Door in 1946 was a most welcome gift.[2]

The new metropolitan Union kindergartens were, in the early part of this period, in areas traditionally associated with Union activity—in south-west Brunswick, in Richmond, and further out in the poorer sections of Prahran,


Heidelberg
□ Existing Kindergartens
■ New Union Kindergartens

5 By 1959

Northcote, and Heidelberg; later in 1958 and 1959 a new venture started which was to blossom in the 1960s—Union kindergartens in the outer industrial areas at East Sunshine and West Dandenong, on the outer edge of suburban Melbourne.

The first kindergarten lost to the Union was Footscray in 1947; this kindergarten, unable, it seems, to maintain the standards required by the Union, allowed its affiliation to lapse. Three others were withdrawn from affiliation by the Melbourne City Council, which now took advantage of the Health Department subsidy to administer kindergartens in its own area, namely Hopetoun in Flemington (withdrawn 1949), Lady Huntingfield in North Melbourne (1953), and Powlett Reserve (1955); this last was the Union's old black sheep, City Crèche Kindergarten recently transplanted to beautiful new quarters in East Melbourne. Melbourne was not the only municipality to conduct kindergartens; Kew and South Melbourne were among the first of many municipal newcomers into the pre-school field, and both appointed Union kindergarteners as pre-school officers to supervise their kindergartens, Miss Beth Stubbs in Kew (1947) and Miss Nancy Bastow in South Melbourne (1948) being the first municipal pre-school officers.[3] In 1951 the Municipal Pre-School Association was formed[4], taking its place with the FKU and the various church bodies as another organization concerned with the education of the pre-school child.

Dr K.S. Cunningham has commented that Australia, unlike the United Kingdom or the USA, has given, in the past, virtually no responsibility to its local government authorities in the field of education.[5] The state systems of primary and secondary education, developed in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, were all highly centralized. Only with community recognition of the value of pre-school education were local authorities at last able to play some part; perhaps the current increase in the activity of local councils on primary and secondary government school councils may in some measure stem from realization that local support for local educational activity is of mutual benefit to both education and community—a lesson learnt via municipal involvement with pre-school centres.

Several disaffiliations from the Union were the result of population changes in the formerly densely-populated, inner, industrial suburbs. This phenomenon was noted by Miss Fraser, the Union's Director of Pre-School Activities, as early as 1952, when she wrote that waiting lists for places at inner suburban kindergartens were diminishing as families were rehoused[6]; this was splendid for the remaining children, of course, but pointed to the necessity of considering what, if anything, was the future of kindergarten work in formerly overcrowded areas. Two years later Miss Fraser discussed population trends in Carlton, Collingwood, and South Melbourne, where she noticed a similar development[7]; in the South Melbourne area, for instance, where there was a concentration of kindergartens in the inner South Melbourne-Montague district, a much greater number of pre-school children was now to be found in the Albert Park-Middle Park district. The Union's social worker noted the same trend in Burnley in 1955[8] where there was no longer any need to enrol children at kindergarten before they were of an age to attend.

The first kindergarten to close for this reason was the old Marie Kirk (formerly WCTU) in Richmond in 1953; here the committee 'in view of the decreasing numbers of pre-school children in the area' closed the kindergarten and opened a centre for handicapped children. Next, at the end of 1954, Melbourne's oldest free kindergarten closed after over half a century of service to the children of Carlton; the reason given was 'the population movement to the outer suburbs'. Perhaps mercifully, its single-minded founder, Miss F.M. Wilson, did not witness the end of her beloved kindergarten; she died in August 1946, warmly remembered in the pre-school world for her 'devotion to the cause of little children'.[9] Finally, at the end of the 1950s, both Burnley Free Kindergarten, another 'original', and Lady Northcote at Montague were closed[10]; again the reason was 'the continued drift of the population from the inner suburbs'. It is significant that, even as the need for these kindergartens disappeared, new needs became evident in the outer suburbs, especially in areas of rapid growth where the Housing Commission was striving to resettle families from the older, industrial suburbs.

Just as at the beginning of World War II the Union had established the Ada Mary a'Beckett Free Kindergarten at Fishermen's Bend, the first Housing Commission estate, so at its close they affiliated Dobson Free Kindergarten (1946) in a commission estate at Maidstone in Melbourne's north-west, while 1953 saw the affiliation of the Bellfield Methodist Kindergarten in a commission area in West Heidelberg. Later in the same decade, as Miss Fraser reported 'a rapidly increasing number of requests for information regarding the establishment of new centres . . . from outer suburbs'[11], Union kindergartens were established at East Sunshine and Dandenong West, both close to Housing Commission developments.

Apart from the closing of some kindergartens and the loss of three others to the Melbourne City Council, several local committees reduced their kindergartens from double to single units. The Ada Mary at Fishermen's Bend and the Boroondara Kindergarten in Richmond were both reduced to single-unit kindergartens in 1955.[12] The Union, still thrifty, was concerned at the waste of good facilities, and investigations were made to see if parents with pre-school children, but without pre-school opportunity, would be willing to send

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them to inner suburbs for kindergarten. This suggestion met with virtually no response and was abandoned.[13]

Some losses, some closures, reduction to single-unit size or in the number of children attending—all these led to a surprisingly small increase in the number of children enrolled in Union kindergartens in the period to 1959. In 1945 there were 2558 Union kindergarten children; in 1959, 2836, an increase of only 278. Yet, on closer reflection, these figures should not surprise us. The Union allowed a trained director to have charge of no more than 30 children at one time and, while the output of diplomates remained below demand, the number of children could not increase greatly.[14] The new Dobson Kindergarten, then a single unit catering for 30 children, had a waiting list of 150 within two months of opening; by 1952 the list had 230 names, while the kindergarten's annual report of 1955 referred to 'an ever-increasing waiting list with its high ratio of children from the Housing Commission estate'.[15]

1947 saw the end of the Voluntary Helpers Association which had previously provided a willing, steady, and usually experienced pool of untrained assistants. In its place, parents, especially mothers, were used increasingly as helpers in kindergartens for the more routine, non-teaching tasks. Inevitably, this source of labour was unreliable—a school-age child at home with a cold, an ailing toddler, the arrival of a new baby—these and a dozen other domestic emergencies could keep a mother from kindergarten on her rostered 'day'. In 1950, when a change in the College curriculum introduced far more theoretical work for third-year students, previously used as unpaid assistants, this source of staff was also drastically reduced. By the mid-1950s, therefore, many local committees were using paid, untrained helpers in kindergartens; in 1958, 38 out of 51 kindergartens employed such assistants.[16]

The shortage of graduates and the increase in the overall number of kindergartens, not only Union kindergartens, led to trained staff being spread very thinly on the ground.[17] Whereas in the previous generation a young graduate would normally expect to serve for at least a year, possibly two or three, as assistant to an experienced director in a big kindergarten, she was now perforce sent immediately to a kindergarten where she was in sole charge and where she was the only professional teacher. This inevitably put her under tremendous strain, for hers was not only the direct responsibility for the children, but also—unlike her fellows in infant or primary grades in schools—for the administration of her kindergarten, including dealing with the committee which employed her, and for work with families, always considered a vital part of the kindergartener's role. At this very time when she needed opportunity to plan programs and to visit children's homes, the gradual development of 'play groups' in the kindergartens for afternoon sessions gave her fewer and fewer hours when she was not directly involved with children in her teaching role.

As early as 1948, the Union's Annual Report refers to 'play groups'.[18] These were held in kindergarten buildings with kindergarten equipment, in charge of the kindergarten director on two or three afternoons a week, for sessions of 1½ to 2 hours; they were for children once referred to as the 'babies', mainly the three-year-olds. They arose in response to the growing demand in the community for pre-school experience for children, and developed in this fashion because of the shortage of trained staff; by this means, one director had charge of the older group of up to 30 children from 9 to 12 each morning, and then on some afternoons catered for not more than 15 in the younger age group. Miss Fraser, in her 1953 annual report, strongly recommended these 'small, informal afternoon groups' as 'a child's first step from his own familiar family group'.[19] This development meant that time for planning, preparation, and home visiting was much reduced, but it was an economical use of expensive facilities and scarce labour. This pattern, which had been emerging since World War II, was formalized in 1957 when Health Department subsidies to kindergartens were payable only if at least eight sessions a week were held.[20] By this time the Union had dropped the name 'play group', though it did not use the hallowed term 'kindergarten' for the afternoon sessions; instead the official distinction was into 'morning kindergarten' and 'afternoon groups'.

This situation worried the Union. They worried chiefly because of their consistent, long-term concern with the maintenance of standards. Thus, Mrs Margaret Macneil, then acting-president, warned in 1949:

> We must take stock of our work and our organization. There is a very real danger that, with the acceptance by the community of pre-school work as part of its pattern of life, the early enthusiasm and care in establishing our pre-school centres, may pass into an easy optimism that everything is accomplished. Too much public pressure could easily encourage us to lower the standards we have built up over the years.[21]

Training, theoretical and practical, was not enough; experience in kindergarten work, as in any other profession, was essential if one's senior staff were to be really first rate. Miss Anne Dreyer, returning to the Union as a supervisor in 1951 after a ten-year absence, commented on the youthfulness of the new directors, and admired their 'vitality, keenness, patience, freshness, and loyalty to the profession'; but she added, after visiting a kindergarten directed by a more senior member of staff that 'maturity and experience' were very desirable qualities in a kindergartener.[22]

Auriole Fraser knew this very well and wrote shortly after World War II of the lack of a sufficient number of experienced teachers to fill the many senior positions as they became vacant.

> Young members of staff have risen splendidly to the occasion and carried the work through the difficult years of senior staffing shortage, but the responsibilities they have carried have been very heavy and we are not unaware of the strain under which many of our young teachers have worked.[23]

Two years later she commented on the number of young directors in senior positions which they had accepted 'with a full awareness of the task before them. They are willing to take these positions, knowing the need, when many others involving far less responsibility were available'.[24] By 1951, the majority of Union directors and assistants were classed by Miss Fraser as 'young'[25]—45 of a staff of 85 qualified kindergarteners had had less than two years teaching experience, and another 14 between two and four years; Miss Fraser was concerned at the heavy responsibility they carried so soon after graduation. 1952 was better; in that year all newly appointed directors had had at least one year's post-diploma experience in a kindergarten[26]; but that was before the fall in student enrolments in 1950 and 1951 was felt in the field. The problem, not merely of shortage of staff, but of *experienced* staff, continued throughout the decade.

The staffing problem, though basically the result of low student numbers, was not eased by the salary position. There is no need to reiterate here what was noticed earlier about the low salaries paid to trained kindergarteners before World War II. Salaries increased after the war—they could scarcely have been reduced!—but so did the cost of living; and so too did the salaries in comparable professions like primary and sub-primary teaching. In 1949 the Union council approved a recommendation from the finance committee, approved in turn by the executive, that from 1949 a director's salary should increase from the present £300–335 per annum (according to the number of children in her care) to £340–380, and an assistant's from £255–285 to £290–320 by annual increments of £10.[27] This was useful, but far more useful was the simultaneous approval of the recommendation that 'variations in the basic wage and cost of living adjustments should be made automatic to salaries of members of staff'. In a time of constant inflation this was essential if kindergarteners were to be able even to exist on their salaries.

Unfortunately, neither this automatic adjustment nor a further salary increase recommended in 1950[28] seems to have been actually implemented. In July 1951, the irate father of a third-year KTC student wrote from Yallourn to protest: when his daughter began her training, he said, a kindergartener's salary was equal to the male basic wage; but while the basic wage had now risen by some 70 per cent to £9/9/– a week, a director's salary was still £7/2/3–£7/17/6, and an assistant's £5/15/–£6/7/–. As 'respectable board' in Melbourne was at least £5 a week, a country teacher in a city kindergarten was evidently doomed to starvation.[29] Miss Fraser would have agreed with this paternal complaint; she told the Union executive:

> Many kindergarteners boarding or in flats are finding it almost impossible to manage on their salaries. Some of the Union's most senior teachers are seriously considering whether or not they should continue. An increase in salaries was the only means of stopping the decline in available staff.[30]

In this desperate situation, the executive recommended that kindergarten salaries should in future be those determined by the Teachers (Girls Schools) Board, suitably adapted to ensure the margin between directors and assistants.[31] This, from the start of 1952, greatly increased the financial burden on local committees who paid the directors, and on the Union who paid the assistants (though there were fewer of these now) and also the trained kindergarteners on the Union and College staffs—that is, Director of Pre-School Activities, supervisors, principal and vice-principal. The strain was becoming too great; without the government subsidy it would have been unbearable. The annual report of 1953 reflects a very tired Union, still bearing responsibility for the College and still paying salaries at rates they were now powerless to determine.[32] They sadly missed the former considerable financial aid of the Silver Door which in its hey-day from 1940 to 1950, when it occupied Mr Parker's warehouse in Flinders Lane, had raised nearly £55 000 for Union funds, most of which was devoted to those professional salaries for which the Union, not the local committees, was responsible.[33] At the end of the war, under the leadership of Mrs Muriel Flintoff, the organization had turned its energies from salvage to food parcels which they packed and dispatched (for a fee) to hungry Britain. Between 1945–46 and 1950–51, £46 000 was given to the FKU, mainly from this source. The secret of success was that the Silver Door paid neither rent nor wages. From the end of 1950, however, the warehouse was no longer available; the Silver Door turned into a very ordinary ladies auxiliary; having donated £8300 in 1950–51, they could manage in 1951–52 only £188, and in 1952–53 only £115. The effect on Union finances was catastrophic. Mrs Ethel Southey, the president, tried to encourage the Union 'to look forward with renewed vigour, fired with fresh enthusiasm to overcome the difficulties which lie ahead', but her brave words needed hard cash to support them.

In 1954, the local committees were relieved of part of their burden with a change in the method of assessing the government subsidy payable to a kin-

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dergarten.[34] It was no longer to be on a per child but on a per trained teacher basis. It was paid via the Union, but each kindergarten now received the full salary of its director.

In terms of financial remuneration, qualified kindergarten teachers were now on an equality with women in comparable school teaching positions. Salaries were brought under the new Kindergarten Teachers Board Determination in 1958, but this led to no immediate change in the now adequate rates of pay. A director in her first year, on a weekly salary of £7, augmented by a cost of living allowance of £7/2/2, received a yearly salary of £733; an experienced director received £915 and a first-year assistant £681.[35]

Throughout the immediate post-war period, then, there continued to be a shortage of kindergarten staff; but, whereas in the first part of this 15 years this was due both to a shortage of trainees and to low salaries when trained, in the latter 1950s it would seem to have been due far more to the shortage of trainees. It is true that teachers both in departmental and independent schools enjoyed superannuation benefits, and that they carried less responsibility in a less isolated situation; but the main operative difference between the pre-school and the school teacher, which had been salary, was now evened out, *once the teacher was trained*. The difference in training grants remained, as shown in Chapter 7, the basic cause of the shortage of kindergarten teachers in the 1950s.

After the 1954 change in the basis of Health Department subsidy payments, the salary levels of trained kindergarteners in kindergartens were no longer a direct financial burden on either Union or local committees. The Union however remained responsible for the salaries of its supervisors (approximately £1000 per annum by the first Board Determination of 1958) and of trained kindergarteners on the College staff, and also for all administrative costs which increased steadily throughout the 1950s. Costs rose for a variety of reasons; firstly, because of salary increases both professional and clerical; secondly, because there were more kindergartens to supervise, advise, and correspond with; thirdly, because the Union, as one of its services to local committees, had in 1952 taken all employees (professional and domestic) in local kindergartens into a Group Taxation Scheme which the Union clerical staff administered[36]; and fourthly, because of the increase in paper work which is apparently inevitable with an increase of government activity in any field. Steadily rising costs presented a major problem to a voluntary organization already heavily dependent on private donations and grants from charitable trusts and business firms. In 1950/51 the administrative expenses of the Union were £5411; in 1953/54, £7372; by 1956/57, a frightening £8270.[37]

The executive and finance committees had seen the situation developing; this was one of the reasons, perhaps the main reason, why they worked so desperately in the early 1950s to hand over responsibility for the College. At the annual meeting in June 1955, the honorary treasurer, Mr W.A.K. a'Beckett, son of Ada Mary a'Beckett, spoke of the gravity of the financial situation; the Union, he said, was spending each week £55 above its income.[38] The executive prepared itself for a special Council meeting to discuss Union finances, noting that no help for administrative expenses came from government. They noted that the Union was not yet—in August—overdrawn; costs were however rising so rapidly that they feared 'the Union could very quickly go into an impossible deficit'.[39] They had already asked the Health Department for help with supervisors' salaries, on the analogy of municipalities receiving grants towards the salaries of their pre-school officers; they now determined to ask their affiliated kindergartens for gifts to assist the Union's administrative expenses—after all, they reasoned, church kindergarten bodies retained some of their government grant for administrative purposes, whereas the Union passed them all on to their kindergartens.

Miss Olive Dodd, the Union president, once its social worker, had the unenviable task of conducting a special Council meeting in August 1955[40], and handled it most competently. She repeated the two questions already set out for local committees in a circular: 1 Did local committees still desire to be associated with the Union? 2 If so, did they wish the Union to maintain a central administration? Two delegates—from Coronation Kindergarten in Moonee Ponds and the Euroa Kindergarten—spoke most warmly to the effect that the free kindergartens and the Union were a tremendous and well-loved asset to community life in their districts. There were no further speakers, and the motion, 'That the Free Kindergarten Union of Victoria be continued and its central administration be retained' was carried unanimously.

This being the wish of the local committees, they now had to deal with the financial implications of their decision. It was agreed that each kindergarten would endeavour to contribute, towards the estimated deficit in administrative costs, a minimum of £1 per child for 1955/56. (The holiday homes and the Royal Children's Hospital Kindergarten were not asked to contribute.) The result was a very pleasing £1621—and a heartening sense of solidarity between Union and local committees. One is reminded of the local committees rallying to the aid of the central body in 1938 during an earlier financial crisis.

The administration struggled on. Later in the year, the Minister of Health intimated that he had no funds available to help with 'professional salaries'.[41] By February 1956, the General Account, which included administrative expenses and professional salaries, was overdrawn by £1033 and the Training Account by £3079; as the total agreed overdraft with the bank was £3000, funds had therefore to be drawn from the Union's Investment Fund to reduce the overdraft and 'for the first time capital was being used for general running expenses'.[42]

At this stage, the Union still believed that their responsibility for the College was virtually ended, and they looked forward to reduced expenses and to a healthy annual rental from the Education Department for use of College land and premises which were to remain Union property.[43] Mr a'Beckett warned them, however, that such rent would not, he thought, 'exceed or equal the difference between income an expenditure'.[44] The Union therefore resolved to reduce its office staff and to hold a big public appeal.[45] As in the 1930s, numerous schemes for fund-raising were suggested and discussed[46], some to be rejected, others accepted, with varying but not marked success. The deficit in the General Account rose once again in 1956/57 to £1805. By the end of 1957 the honorary treasurer was again selling the Union's dwindling assets to reduce the bank overdraft[47], though some local committees, unsolicited, were still making donations towards the costs of central administration.

1958 saw a temporary turning of the tide. Administrative expenses were reduced by £1000 for the year, and there was no deficit in the administrative account. One can only guess at the hidden cost of this in terms of hours worked in unpaid overtime by the depleted office staff, and at the extent of the voluntary efforts of members of the executive. From July 1958, £1500 was received annually as rent for Mooroolbeek; and the training account benefited by the additional £5000 government grant—from £15 000 to £20 000 per annum—the reward of the Union retaining responsibility for the College. The other big financial receipt of 1958 came from the monster Jubilee Fête which netted over £2000[48] and resulted for the first time in the decade in a credit balance of £1636 in the General Account.

It was well for the Union that throughout the post-war years it enjoyed the services of a series of women who were not only dedicated to the free kindergarten cause, but extremely capable. They remained representatives of the upper income bracket, products of independent schools, members of what is nowadays called 'the Establishment'; but it was no longer sufficient for them to request donations from trust funds, and supplement these with personal gifts and the proceeds of the occasional dance or bridge party. Government had entered the pre-school world. The Union's leaders found themselves dealing with ministers and heads of departments; financial affairs became increasingly complex; the Union members perforce became business women. Consider only a few of the more prominent members of the Union in this period.

Mrs Alice Creswick, who became president in July 1946, resigned in April 1949[49]; under her, the first efforts were made at expansion of the College, for she saw clearly that the essential basis for the development of the kindergarten movement was a large, constantly renewed pool of qualified teachers. A large lecture block at Mooroolbeek was named for her and she endowed an annual scholarship for a kindergarten student. Her successor, Mrs Ethel Southey (October 1949 to March 1955)[50], devoted much of her energy to the same cause; one had to have teachers; their training was now beyond the scope of a voluntary body; it is her name that is associated with efforts, abortive at that time, to have the College taken over by the Education Department. At Mrs Southey's right hand was Mrs Margaret Macneil—formerly acting-president (between Mrs Creswick and Mrs Southey) and convener of the education committee from 1945 to 1955. The third president of the period (April 1955 to April 1959)[51] was Miss Olive Dodd, formerly the Union social worker and a member of the executive since 1951. It was her anxious task to contemplate the possible disbandment of the Union and her triumph to have so led her executive and the local committees that together they faced and overcame the financial crisis and enabled the Union to carry on.

The Union was no less fortunate in its paid staff. Most notable in this period was its Director of Pre-School Activities, Miss Auriole Fraser[52], who held the position from 1945 till the end of 1959—an able, devoted, enthusiastic, and much-loved inspiration to her supervisors and directors. With her, one must also recall Miss Agnes Sutherland, supervisor from 1945 till 1959 when she became pre-school officer to the municipality of Kew; and Miss Anne Dreyer, who returned to the Union as supervisor in 1951 after ten years in the Kindergarten of the Air and remained till 1954.

The 1940s and 1950s saw the death or end of active service of most of the Union's pioneers: Miss F.M. Wilson of Carlton Kindergarten died in 1946[53]; Miss Mary Lush, C.B.E., her successor there and Union president before Mrs Creswick, in 1959[54]; Mrs V. Wischer, survivor of the Union's major 1911 upheaval, in 1951[55]; and one of the Union's great figures, Mrs Ada Mary a'Beckett, C.B.E., in 1948.[56] The Union's tribute to her concluded: 'The days of pioneering work such as Mrs a'Beckett did are over and we must build on the foundations laid by Mrs a'Beckett and her colleagues'. The words might have been applied to many of the Union stalwarts who were drawn to the movement in its early days and who, having guided it through two wars, a great depression, and the sudden rapid expansion of the post-war era, had, by 1958 when the Union celebrated its Jubilee, 'handed on the torch' to younger women.

While the Union leaders dealt with matters of policy and agonized over problems of training and finance, the everyday work of the individual kindergartens under their ardent young directors continued as usual. Methods changed gradually; the approach was perhaps a little less formal; there were fewer organized activities and more scope for children to follow through their own interests; always the happy, relaxed atmosphere remained unchanged. The kindergartens were still nominally 'free', but that word now bore, for most parents, little relation to its accepted meaning. It is true that formal fees could not be charged; if they were, the essential departmental subsidy would be withdrawn[57]; parents were however 'encouraged' to make suitable, designated 'contributions'; receipts were issued for these contributions and they were—the final irony—deductible against income tax as an 'educational expense'.

It is only fair to say that all Union directors were empowered to waive or reduce the 'contribution' if any parent presented what appeared to be a genuine case of hardship; inability to pay could not debar a child from a Union kindergarten if there was a vacancy in his age group.

Little by little during the war and post-war years dire poverty receded from the homes of most young working-class families. This improvement was reflected in the health of the children attending the Union's kindergartens. As late as 1950 the Union's acting medical officer could write:

> While the majority of the children are active and rarely ill apart from colds, they are far from the peak of health . . . Many are undernourished and pick at their food . . . The really healthy children are such a joy to see that it is appalling to realise that only 18% of the children examined could be recorded as fit.[58]

Dr Green was referring most particularly to dental decay and to lack of properly nutritious food; a great deal of time was spent by directors in advising mothers on how best to provide an adequate and balanced diet.

As the 1940s gave place to the 1950s, however, we hear better and better reports of the children's physical health (with the exception of carious teeth). In 1955, after consultation with the Union, the Melbourne District Nursing Society ceased sending its sisters on a regular weekly visit to Union kindergartens[59], though a sister would always attend if required. Regular attendance was deemed no longer necessary 'owing to the greatly improved standards of health amongst the children of our community'. Similarly, fewer and fewer kindergartens found it necessary to provide the 'dinner and sleep' program[60] which had been almost universal during the depression years and had been retained in many kindergartens throughout the 1940s. The 1953 Annual Report attributed this change to 'more regular employment of parents, diminishing number of "full-time" working mothers, and improved health of many children'. By the beginning of 1955 only one Union kindergarten (the Isabel Henderson, formerly Fitzroy Mission, Kindergarten) was serving a mid-day meal[61], and that only to some of its children who were thought to require it.

Now, however, a different hazard to the health of some kindergarten children was becoming apparent. In the years of poverty between the wars there had been little building of homes suitable for rent or capable of purchase by working-class families, and few if any repairs or even maintenance to the cottages and terraces in which most of them lived, the majority of them dating from the development of industrial Melbourne in the late nineteenth century. Dr John Dale, whose vision was acknowledged in Chapter 5, strove and failed in his 20 years as Medical Officer to the City of Melbourne to make any noticeable improvement in the living conditions of Melbourne's poor; not till 1936 was the Housing Commission established to begin its long-range program of slum demolition and rehousing. Almost at once—but not till the Fishermen's Bend project had been completed and the Ada Mary a'Beckett Kindergarten built to serve its transplanted families—the Commission's activities were curtailed by the war. This meant that in 1945 thousands of families, many of them now enjoying adequate and regular incomes, were living in homes which either had been or should have been condemned 10 or 20 years before.

Furthermore, the population of Melbourne was growing—not only with the inevitable post-war 'baby boom', but also with the first immigrants from Europe, many of them displaced persons with no assets but their labour. All this, together with an acute temporary shortage of building materials as factories were gradually shifted from war-time to peace-time production, led to a desperate housing problem. Many houses were not only old and dilapidated, crowded together, and in some cases unfit for decent human habitation, but were also sheltering far more people than could reasonably fit into them, as married sons or daughters, cousins from overseas, or friends from the country moved in with Mum and Dad or slept in a shed in the yard, sharing cooking and toilet facilities. Children were born and brought up in domestic situations like these, often without peace or privacy, or even a bed to call their own; emotional stress was the inevitable result. The Union's 1947 Annual Report mentions this problem:

> Families are still forced to live in sub-standard homes or to share with others, and in these disturbed conditions it is difficult for a child to develop along the right lines, mentally, morally and emotionally.[62]

Again and again throughout the 1950s, the reports refer to the detrimental effects on a child of inadequate or crowded housing. In 1955 for instance, the social worker wrote:

> How to meet the housing needs of families is a continual problem which we can expect to continue while there is insufficient housing to meet the requirements of the population. Various problems arise—the high cost of rooms leaving very little for food and clothing, with the fear of reprisals if any action is taken regarding rent.

> Fear of eviction by those in tenanted houses with insufficient means to purchase. Homes in very poor condition which contribute to the ill-health of the family, and which at present are not likely to be repaired or demolished . . . Many parents attempt to build up their financial resources to gain the security of a permanent home, either by father working excessive overtime, or by the mother going to work. In both cases children are deprived of their parents to some extent.[63]

In the following year she sounded the same note, writing of 'the need for housing continually increasing and out-stripping the supply'.[64]

Very gradually the quality and amount of housing available to young working families improved, both government provided and privately built; some of the worst inner slum areas were cleared, resulting in a decrease in population there and an increase in outer areas. But still, in 1958, the Union's social worker could deplore the living conditions of many children who 'have the cards stacked against them from birth'.[65]

There had always been children in this 'disadvantaged' category—there still are, indeed—and it had been in an attempt to alleviate their condition, to improve their physical state and broaden their limited slum horizons that the Past Students Association of the KTC had opened its original holiday home at Forest Hill in 1926, and later the second home at East Ringwood. When World War II ended, the homes were still there, still supported by the devoted efforts of the past students, still pursuing the same policy which is crystallized in this 'recipe' on the cover of their 1941 Annual Report. Now however, in the 1950s, several factors coalesced to make the decade one of crisis for the homes and their supporters.

The first factor was a change in the outlook of the past students themselves. As early as 1942, the name of 'Past Students' was officially abandoned and the group became known as the Graduates' Association.[66] Its sole interest however remained the support of the holiday homes, and it is not clear why the Graduates' Annual Report of 1942 should have decided on the new title as 'more appropriate'. A more meaningful change is apparent in 1949 when the Association adopted a new constitution.[67] One of the changes made by this was that the homes were no longer the sole or even primary object of the Association. There was to be a Graduate Association Council with several committees to deal with different facets of the Association's activities—a social committee, an educational committee, and a committee to administer each holiday home. At the same time, the Memorandum of Association (for the Graduates' Association now became an official incorporated body) redefined the objects of the Association in this significant order: the 'first and principal object' was 'to perpetuate and maintain the professional ideals standards and traditions of the College'; the other secondary objects were 'to meet together

Recipe:

HOW TO MAKE HAPPY, HEALTHY AUSTRALIANS

"Take one large grassy field, one dozen or so of children, two or three small dogs, a pinch of brook, and some pebbles.

"Mix the children and dogs well together, put them into the field, stirring constantly. Pour the brook over the pebbles, sprinkle the field with flowers, spread over all a deep blue sky, and bake in a hot sun. When brown, set away to cool in a bath-tub."

. . . — . . . — . . . —

The ingredients are here. We need your hand to mix them.

regularly' and 'to participate in Community Service, such as administration and acceptance of financial responsibility for the Holiday Homes, the M.V. Gutteridge Memorial Lecture etc.'.

Clearly, the educational side of the Association was being emphasized; this may be further seen in what the Association proudly referred to as its 'first educational venture'—a successful study week in May 1948 attended by over 200 enthusiastic kindergarten graduates[68]—and by the first of the annual M.V. Gutteridge lectures delivered in 1949. The wholehearted support of the principal and Council of the KTC for the Union's unsuccessful efforts to have the College transferred to the Education Department in the 1950s may be seen in this context. So may the development of a more academic third year; there was now increasing emphasis on educational theory, less on practical experience. The gearing of kindergarteners' salaries to those of teachers in independent girls schools and later the establishment of the Kindergarten Teachers Wages Board also demonstrate the image pre-school staff had of themselves as educators—a picture they strove to present to the public to replace the image of gentle, womanly care for the inner suburban waif.

The gradual rise in salary levels in the 1950s, resulting from this insistence on themselves as professional educators in the same general category as school teachers, and made possible by the subsidizing of salaries by the Health Department, meant that it was now possible for a kindergartener to live on her salary. A basic philanthropic motive, urging a young woman to work for the betterment of children in need, was no longer essential for a pre-school teacher.

The increase in salaries, however, leads us directly to the second factor in the holiday homes crisis of the 1950s. This was finance. Not only salaries, but the wages of domestic and outdoor staff rose substantially, so did costs for food at the homes and costs of maintenance. Thus, at the very time when there was a decline in the philanthropic motivation of some graduates, the burden of continued financial support of the homes was increasing. By the mid-1950s, both homes were operating at a loss.[69] The burden was made heavier by the shortage of trained staff[70]—a burden shared by all pre-school organizations; in this case, the East Ringwood home, Ware, was actually closed for six months at the beginning of 1954 because no director could be obtained.

These two factors—increasing educational emphasis and increasing financial and staffing problems—coincided in time with a third factor, an evident improvement in the physical well-being and even, gradually, in the living conditions of children attending the Union's kindergartens. It is not therefore surprising to find some kindergarten graduates seriously questioning the continued need for and value of the holiday homes. Was not the amount of time, effort, and money expended on them out of proportion to the need? During the

1950s this question was aired many times, most particularly at a 'forum' of graduates in August 1954 when written submissions and oral opinions, from kindergarteners, social workers, psychologists, and paediatricians were received and pondered.[71] But, by this time, the fourth catalytic factor had appeared to join the other three ingredients in what was fast becoming a seething cauldron of anxiety and uncertainty, even of mutual distrust and hostility.

The fourth factor was the findings and teachings of Dr John Bowlby, first published in 1951 in his *Maternal Care and Mental Health*[72]; other works followed, and other researchers, notably Dr Anna Freud, supported his findings. Put briefly, the work of these people tended to show that no matter how much a child appeared to benefit from his country holiday in, say, weight gain, improved appetite, more energy, better sleeping habits, all this was cancelled out by the emotional damage he suffered by being separated from his home and parents, most especially from his mother. This theory of 'maternal deprivation' became virtually gospel with pre-school educators in the late 1950s and 1960s; as such it was taught as a cardinal precept to students at the KTC.

Many of the older graduates of the College were aghast at this new teaching and its implications. These were women who had faithfully worked for and in the homes for years, whose charity had built and maintained them, and who had delighted in the evident physical benefit slum children had in earlier days reaped from their holidays. Was it conceivable that they had, over the past 30 years, been doing children not a service but a disservice?

On the other hand, the staff and recent College graduates who felt that the new theory was too well supported by empirical evidence to be disregarded, could not in conscience support the continuation of a policy which was not only contrary to the teaching on child development currently being given at the College, but also, they felt, positively harmful to the children concerned.

For a time, the homes committees of the Graduates' Association endeavoured to continue the 'holiday' policy with modifications. At Ware, for instance, from mid-1954 to mid-1956 they experimented with a policy of holidays for children with their mothers[73]—two or even three children from the same family. This was not a great success—partly because the government subsidy was withdrawn which exacerbated the financial situation (though mothers were required to contribute to the housekeeping costs), but largely because many, probably most, mothers whose children were deemed to need a break in the country could not accompany them because of other domestic responsibilities. This meant that Ware was not always being used to capacity, and this too made the financial position worse. To cope with the situation, a conventional play group for 15 local children was started at Ware for four sessions a week.[74] This not only provided a facility for families in a newly developing outer suburb, but also provided a nucleus of 'regulars' into which the groups of 'holiday' children could be quickly integrated. The mother-and-child policy was finally abandoned when the firm of J.B. Were, who financed a brand new home, Warrawong, beside the old Ware building in 1958, stipulated that it was to be for children only.[75]

In 1957 and 1958 both homes were used for children's holidays only, recommended boys and girls being accepted from non-affiliated as well as from Union kindergartens; the morning group of local children continued at East Ringwood. But a new need was now becoming evident in the community—the need for what was called 'emergency care'—that is, for some substitute home for children, either temporarily in the case of a mother's confinement or illness, or for a longer time in cases of a marriage break-up or of a single parent being unable to cope, until such time as a permanent foster home or even a place in an institution could be found for a child. In 1959, for the first time, both Forest Hill and Warrawong accepted a few children in need of emergency care.[76] By this time both homes were clearly feeling threatened; the report from each has a defensive note to it. The Warrawong report states:

> During the year, in addition to providing happy holidays for many children, we have also been able to help many families in distressed circumstances, and in doing so have proved to ourselves, and , we hope, to many others, that there is a real need for Warrawong in the community.

The report from Forest Hill reads:

> It has been felt by some Graduates of the Association during the year that the need for Holiday Homes was not justified, but we feel very sincerely that the challenge is there and also a very real need . . . in the community for emergency care for children. As a result, Forest Hill has been taking children needing emergency care, and we have found these cases very deserving.

1959 was the year of crisis. In March, following a Graduates Association finance meeting late in 1958, an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Association resolved that one holiday home should be sold.[77] It was also agreed that there was a great need for emergency care. Following this meeting, and in response to the predictable outcry raised by the decision to sell one precious home, the Association Council set up an investigation committee to inquire into the need for and the role of the homes.[78] This committee reported back to the Council in June.[79] It said, in brief, that one home was now sufficient to meet the need for holidays, but that (as everyone in the field was now well aware) there was a need for emergency care.

Council members were not satisfied. They held that the committee had approached the problem of the future of the homes by saying to themselves:

The homes are there. They are our property. What shall we do with them? Whereas the Council saw the problem thus: The need for emergency care exists—but, is an institution the best way to meet that need? What about foster homes, for instance, or home help? And, if a home is the best answer, or even the only practicable answer, is it the job of the Graduates' Association to deal with it? Perhaps the Council had not selected the committee carefully enough, nor defined its terms of reference with sufficient precision.

To the Council's mind, the Association was not the right organization to undertake such a colossal task, involving finance, administration, and staff—not for a year or a decade, but on a very long-term continuing basis.[80] They foresaw generations of graduates bound to the supervision and upkeep of the home, regardless of their own wishes and to the exclusion of any other interests they might have; and this, so Council felt, was not the purpose of a body of trained, professional educators.

The position may be put starkly like this. On the one side, there was a growing, articulate group of educationally minded graduates, who dominated the Council of the Association, and who felt that continued involvement with the holiday homes was firstly an inappropriate activity for what they saw as an association of academics, and secondly an activity at variance with modern theories of child development which their institution was teaching and in the veracity of which they believed. On the other side was a large group of graduates who were still philanthropically minded, who were prepared, indeed, to modify the use to which their homes were put, to conform at least in some measure with modern teachings, but who were not prepared to abandon their particular form of social service, embodied in the holiday homes.

Like Miss Dodd speaking to the Union Council four years earlier, Miss Florence Kendall, president of the Graduates' Association and vice-principal of the College, had a difficult task when the graduates assembled in yet another Extraordinary General Meeting in August 1959 to decide which holiday home should be sold.[81] Speaking to the motion that Forest Hill should be sold (inevitably it had to be Forest Hill as Warrawong was brand new), she said firstly that because of its obsession with the holiday homes the Graduates' Association was not fulfilling its duties as a professional association; secondly that there was no longer a need in the community for 'holidays'; thirdly that there was increasing awareness of the inadvisability of separating young children from their families; and fourthly that the Graduates' Association was already overtaxed financially, and that, if they decided to follow the suggestion of the investigation committee and keep both homes—one for holidays and one for emergency care—then the Association Council would resign, feeling that this was not the graduates' proper role, and that they had neither the financial means nor the administrative competence to carry it out. Council was defeated on the ballot and resigned as Miss Kendall had promised, though remaining in office till a new council was elected in October.[82]

The Union's education committee reported on this upheaval to the executive in August of the following year[83]: the account is balanced and dispassionate—qualities not easily achieved when much hurt had been engendered by controversy and when the College and its students were still formally the responsibility of the Union. Clearly, what the Union found most disturbing was the professional standing of the former Association Council. The previous Council had included the Union's Director of Pre-School Activities and one of her supervisors, one Union director and another former director, two municipal pre-school officers, and both principal and vice-principal of the K.T.C. All were leaders in the pre-school field in Victoria.[84]

The new Graduates' Association Council, under its new president, Miss Sheila Macneil, immediately shouldered sensibly and enthusiastically a very onerous task. The graduates had learnt much in the 1950s; the teachings of Bowlby had not passed them by; they were well aware of the need for emergency care; they were also aware of the need to have a steady source of income—much as the Union welcomed the regular annual rental from Mooroolbeek.

Forest Hill was changed over to become a residential kindergarten for emergency care where children were kept—often two or more from the one family—from periods varying from two days to six weeks[85]; this home was one of the first in Victoria to provide such care at a time when it was, as it still is, vitally needed. Regardless of the validity of Bowlby's findings, if there is no maternal affection or no family home however humble where a child can enjoy security and love, some such residential care is essential; and highly trained kindergarteners, with their expertise in pre-school work as well as their concern for and love of the small child, are the ideal people to provide a substitute home. Warrawong continued for some years longer as a more conventional holiday home[86]; various experiments were tried in an attempt to lessen the trauma of being taken away from home. Both parents and children were told more about the home first; parents were encouraged to come up with children and settle them in, and to visit at the weekend; the length of the holiday was reduced from three weeks to ten days; and so on. This approach was, for a time, successful, but over the next five years the demand for emergency care grew while the need for holidays continued to decline, so that by 1965 Warrawong too had become an emergency, residential kindergarten[87], nearly always full to its capacity of 12 children. It retained its conventional morning kindergarten for local children.

On the financial side, two important measures were taken.[88] Firstly, some of the land belonging to each home, sub-divided into 'desirable residential blocks', was sold and the proceeds invested to provide a steady income; and, secondly, at the instigation of Miss Helen Sage, a graduate from pre-Mooroolbeek days, an opportunity shop was opened in North Carlton. This enterprise, pursued with intelligence, persistence, and enthusiasm, provided in its very first year £392 for Forest Hill and £295 for Warrawong; three years later, the total divided between the two homes was over £1000, and in 1965/66 over £3000 was raised. These sources of income, plus substantial government grants—£2000 from the Hospitals and Charities Commission in the early 1960s and a slightly smaller sum direct from the state government—together with what the Association's 1960 Annual Report referred to as 'drastic changes' in the methods of accounting, enabled the homes to survive financially.

The defeated party contented itself with withdrawing College students from Forest Hill[89] where previously in twos and threes they had gone for experience in the care of children 24 hours a day, and where they had provided a very useful source of unpaid labour. For a group holding so strongly to Bowlby's 'maternal deprivation' philosophy, and which included both principal and vice-principal of the College, this action was predictable. Later, when both homes became emergency care centres, the students returned.

This brief outline of the metamorphosis of the holiday homes, and the drama which accompanied it, has extended a little ahead of the decade of the 1950s, which was the nominal span of this chapter, but history takes no cognizance of arbitrary decades. The episode reveals two facets of the pre-school world very relevant to this story of the FKU. It shows how the society in which the Union functioned was changing; the straight physical needs of large numbers of Victorian children were no longer acute; incomes went up; nutrition, clothing, and even housing gradually improved. But as one source of anxiety was removed, another arose. The acute pressures of busy, materialistic city life—perhaps, some would say, too, a slackening of moral standards—led to increasing emotional stress in homes and an increasing number of broken homes, with inevitable ill effects on a child lacking á stable family life and a secure home background. And unlike the physical deprivations of the 1920s and 1930s this psychological distress and damage was not confined to the children of the poor. The change in, what had seemed to earlier kindergarteners, the unchanging pattern of family and social life was to present new problems for the coming generation of teachers, which will be considered later.

Secondly, the episode sheds further light on the philanthropic-educational dichotomy which many commentators hold existed from the beginning of the free kindergarten movement. This author's view, as given earlier, is that, though both strands have clearly been present from the beginning, there was little initial conflict because the pre-school educator in the first half of this century was almost inevitably a philanthropist too.[90] Later, as the necessary connection was broken with higher salaries, as the training of a pre-school teacher became more academic, and as the children among whom she worked became less evidently deprived and, indeed, came increasingly from comfortable middle-class backgrounds, *then* the latent dichotomy began to appear; pre-school educators were no longer, by definition, philanthropists. The 1950s crisis in the Graduates' Association over the holiday homes issue showed, however, that at heart many of them still were.

Chapter 9

New Pastures 1960–72

In March 1963 Miss Helen Paul became the Union's Director of Pre-school Activities[1], returning from a three-year term as principal of the KTC in South Australia. Auriole Fraser had been succeeded in the position by Helen Jenkins, who was Director for only two years before leaving to be married. These three women saw the Union as a pioneering and standard-setting organization—a role which had not become redundant when the Victorian Health Department assumed overall responsibility for the pre-school child in 1944. The Union, as Miss Paul defined its continuing task in 1966, was now that of a 'small specialist organization endeavouring to be something of a catalyst in the evolving of pre-school services in Victoria'.[2]

The chief concern of this small, specialist body was the demonstration and maintenance of standards, and the chief difficulty in its way was shortage of money. The term 'standards' was applied to material things like buildings, playgrounds and equipment, and, more importantly, to human beings—to the ratio of staff to children in a kindergarten and to the ratio of Union supervisors to Union kindergartens. The other firm belief to which the Union consistently adhered was that pre-school education should be available to *all* pre-schoolers, available *free* as was infant welfare for babies and toddlers, and school for older children. Shortage of money made these two aims irreconcilable. The Union could not 'let them all come in', as one cheerful early philanthropist had suggested, if it were to maintain its approved ratio of teacher to children and of supervisor to kindergartens. 'It is a feature of a good kindergarten', wrote Miss Paul in 1963, 'that there are not too many children attending at one time. The teacher may then come to know each child and its family, and may be available to him when he needs her'.[3]

When the Union celebrated its jubilee, there were 52 affiliated kindergartens; ten years later there were 84, and in the year 1972/73, when the Union's finances reached their lowest ebb, there were 88.[4] This was an increase of 69 per cent, impressive when compared, say, with that of the inter-war period; but it should be compared also with an increase of 140 per cent in the total number of kindergartens in the State—343 in 1959 and 829 in 1973.[5]

One reason why Union kindergartens became a steadily smaller percentage of the state total was the Union's insistence that a trained teacher was not to be responsible for more than 50 children, in groups of not more than 25 at any one time.[6] Its policy was, theoretically, even stricter than this, allowing a maximum of 45 only, but where there were long waiting lists the Union bowed to pressure and permitted 50. Numerous examples may be cited of the Union resisting a committee which desired to enrol extra children. Norlane-North Shore Kindergarten, for example, had 55 children when it was affiliated in 1961, but kept its agreement to reduce numbers to 50 in 1962; in the following year, however, they asked permission 'for financial reasons' to raise numbers again to 55. On Union insistence, this committee agreed to conform to standards.[7] The William Parker Memorial Kindergarten in Geelong, however, which had enquired about affiliation, decided not to continue with its application because it wished to enrol more children.[8] Again, in 1967, the Union kindergarten at Lower Templestowe, despite verbal agreement to reduce numbers from 58 to 50, planned to take additional numbers in a Saturday morning group. Similarly, Twin Hills, near Doncaster, planned 90 children in three groups of 30 each.[9] A year later Doncaster Park was temporarily disaffiliated until numbers had reached those acceptable to the Union.[10]

Local committees which failed to comply with Union standards were not acting wantonly. They needed more money. One way to boost funds was by increasing enrolments which led to increased 'contributions'. Early in the 1960s, the financial load borne by committees was somewhat eased when the Victorian Government, after Union pressure, agreed to pay kindergarten subsidies on the basis of the salary entitlement of the trained teacher employed[11]; that is, instead of a flat rate for salary to each committee, the amount of subsidy was calculated on a sliding scale; and those committees which employed teachers whose higher qualifications or longer experience entitled them under the award to higher salaries received commensurately higher subsidy. This not only allayed the fears of senior kindergarteners that they might be dismissed for financial reasons in favour of a cheaper junior, but also removed from committees the temptation to employ an inexperienced teacher in place of a more costly but experienced director.

As the 1960s progressed, however, committees found their financial difficulties increasing. They were not paid subsidy for untrained staff, and their maintenance costs, especially in older kindergartens, were growing heavier, as costs of labour and materials rose. By 1969 the Union estimated that the committee—a voluntary group usually of local parents—was bearing 50 per cent of the cost of providing a subsidized kindergarten service.[12]

In the early 1960s a Union investigation found that the average contribution asked of parents was 5/- per week. Some kindergartens, like Dobson in Maidstone, where an active Ladies Auxiliary raised substantial funds yearly, kept their contribution as low as 3/- per week.[13] Others already charged more and the Union was not happy about the likely, and in some cases the actual, consequences. In 1965 the education committee found:

> In many kindergartens a fee is asked for and parents who cannot afford the fee do not send the child to kindergarten. In some cases there is ill-will between committee and a parent who does not pay.[14]

In the following year the Union learnt that the committee at Castlemaine had increased the expected contribution to $1 per week.[15] Certainly the committee needed the funds, but the Union supervisor was aware of unemployment in Castlemaine, and knew the problems facing 'young families paying off homes'. Following a visit from the supervisor and no less a person than the Director of Pre-school Activities, the committee reduced this sum to 70c.[16]

Committees also tried to alleviate their financial worries by using mothers to help in kindergartens, and most mothers were rostered for 'duty', perhaps two or three times a term, thus avoiding the need for paid domestic help. But some mothers were unable, or even perhaps unwilling, to be rostered: Should their children be excluded from kindergarten in consequence?[17] On principle the Union was bound to answer No, believing that pre-school education should be available to all; but it was the local committee who had to cover the costs of the non-payers.

By the end of the 1960s, the Union saw the previously unthinkable situation where families with financial problems through, for example, high rent, unemployment, or a prison term, where a child particularly needed the benefit of kindergarten, were those least likely to receive it. The Union social worker asked pithily whether 'the level of government assistance inadvertently meant exclusion of services to the socially and financially disadvantaged'.[18] In August 1969, Miss Paul said straight out that 'there was a danger that kindergartens might become little private schools for the "haves"'. Some parents, she added, 'who cannot afford to pay the amounts asked for . . . and who do not wish to be made special cases, do not present themselves at Kindergartens and their children could be squeezed out'.[19] Miss Moorhead repeated her warning early in 1971: 'There is a tendency that attendance at Kindergarten depends on a parent's ability to meet financial obligations, *thus making the service a selective one*. This is contrary to the objects and role of the FKU' (author's italics).[20]

In practice, the Union urged committees to follow a plan first introduced at the Kathleen Kelly Kindergarten in Mildura, and to send unmarked envelopes home weekly to be returned, still unmarked, with the contribution inside.[21] The Health Department which was, directly or indirectly, responsible for all subsidized kindergartens, was ambivalent about the issue. One committee considered excluding a child whose father was not agreeable to the mother helping in the kindergarten. When asked, a departmental official said that the Department would 'go along with' this action, but would not commit itself in writing to approval of such a policy.[22] This is hardly surprising when we recall that under the conditions of subsidy *no* fees were to be charged, and labour in a kindergarten could be regarded as payment in service instead of in cash. Yet, while the Health Department was unable to extract extra money from Treasury to increase subsidies, it had little choice but to turn a blind eye to committees attempting to make ends meet.

When the 1970s dawned, many committees were near financial breaking point, and the 1972 Annual Report spoke frankly of 'the present tendency for subsidised kindergartens to become a privilege of those who can afford to send their children'.[23] Council was told by executive, early in 1973, that the financial burden on committees was 'almost unbearable', that 'government subsidised Kindergartens are available now only to those who can afford to pay and *those who need it most* are not attending' (author's italics).[24]

If committees of individual kindergartens were in such financial straits that children were tacitly, if not officially, excluded when parents could not afford the expected contribution, what was the Union about? Why did such a body, dedicated to the achievement of free pre-school education for all children, allow such a state of affairs to develop and continue? The answer is that the Union could not help it. If standards were to be maintained, only a maximum ratio of children to trained staff member could be permitted; if increased income were needed for equipment and maintenance, then contributions were one way of obtaining it. Financial support or supplement from Union coffers was out of the question; the Union itself was having increasing difficulty in meeting its own financial commitments. It believed that the proper functioning of kindergartens as pre-school educational institutions depended on the quality of supervision, that no supervisor could or should be asked to cope adequately with staff and committee of more than 30 kindergartens—as an absolute maximum.[25] And who paid the supervisors' salaries? The Union. No government grant was received for Union expenses. The government grant to the Union was in fact substantial, but the Union was an intermediary only—all money received went straight to Union kindergartens. But the Union's own expenses were increasing yearly.

First there were expenses of administration.[26] The money received had to be relayed to each of 60 or 70 or 80 kindergartens. Staff were required for this task. In 1964 the load on office staff and on Union finances increased when the Union, at the request of several kindergarten committees, joined the Combined Schools Superannuation Fund. Union directors paid 5 per cent of their salary into this fund and 5 per cent was paid by the Union itself. At the same time, rent for the Union's city offices was rising; in 1961 the yearly rental was £545, in 1968 it was £976, now expressed as $1952. This amount happily fell by nearly $200 a year when the Union moved, late in 1969, to other premises in Bank Place; this was virtually the only cost which fell during this period, but rent had still increased between $600 and $700—in money not real terms—within a decade.

The overall increase in rent was nothing compared with the increase in salaries, particularly at the end of the 1960s. In 1966, the Union's salary bill (for office staff and supervisors) was nearly $14 000; by 1969 it was $20 000; by 1971 nearly $28 000: that is, it had doubled in five years. Salaries were no longer decided as in the Union's early days, by employer-employee negotiation, but by an outside wage tribunal which early in 1969 raised supervisors' salaries, formerly ranging from $72 to $80 a week, to $95 to $105 a week—that is, by over $1000 per annum each. Other rises followed so that the supervisors' salary bill to be paid by the Union rose $7000 in the one financial year 1970/71-1971/72. Where was this money to be found?

Affiliation fees provided a small proportion of the Union's income; from £576 in 1960—that is, $1152—the sum rose, as the number of affiliates grew, to $1578 in 1968. In that year the fee was raised from $30 to $40 a year for a double-unit kindergarten and from $20 to $25 for a single unit. The total received from this source rose by $100 in the next financial year to $1670 and to $2483 in 1972. For the rest, the Union was dependent on donations, on the support of charitable trusts, and on a small income from investments. The Silver Door and the annual Rose Day Appeal helped. At the beginning of the 1960s, the Silver Door contributed between £350 and £400 annually; by the middle of the decade this had risen to £800 ($1600) and by 1969 to $1800, after which it declined, with falling membership, to just over $1050 in 1972/73. At this time, too, the Rose Day Appeal, from which in any case most proceeds went not to the Union but to individual kindergartens, was abandoned for lack of public support.

In short, income in the 1960s did not match expenditure. In 1962/63 the Union's deficit on operating costs was £240, a year later £882, when its expenses were some £10 000 per annum. Three years later (1966/67) operating costs had risen slightly to £10 500, expressed now as $21 000, but there were now 66, as compared with 58, affiliated kindergartens and the deficit was $1157. In the following year, the financial situation was described as 'precarious', operating costs being estimated at some $500 a week. Stringent though small economies and approaches to private donors and trusts reduced the deficit in the following year from $6193 to $493, but thereafter the situation deteriorated again. In 1969/70 the deficit was just over $7000, a year later nearly $10 000—and $210 made from the sale of Union Christmas cards was hailed with disproportionate delight. At the annual meeting in June 1972, spirits and finances reached an all-time low. Expenditure for the financial year just ended was $45 000; the deficit was $12 000—and that had only been achieved by the sale of $10 000 worth of investments. This was a step of desperation; any sale of investments meant less income in the coming year. Five months later the Union's overdraft had reached $18 449 and, looking about them at the preschool scene in Victoria, the Union executive had little cause for optimism.

Already, at the end of 1971, the Presbyterian Kindergarten Association had admitted partial defeat and handed over 38 of its 49 kindergartens to the direct supervision of the Health Department, confining its own activities to 11 kindergartens in 'needy' districts.[27] A year later the entire Baptist kindergarten system of 15 kindergartens was handed over to the Department.[28] The voluntary organizations were losing the battle to work 'within the framework of a democratic society . . . within the administration of a Government Department'.[29]

Why then did the Union continue an effort apparently doomed to failure? Why continue to employ, and to pay at ever-increasing salaries, a supervisory staff of three, and later three-and-a-half, and a part-time social worker, for a mere 85 kindergartens? The Union persisted because it believed that only by these means could it maintain standards—the high standards appropriate for what the Union regarded as a vital stage in a child's education.

Some, but not all, kindergarten committees were well aware of the value of their affiliation with the Union. The Dobson annual report of 1966, for instance, reads, in part:

> Perhaps it is not generally realised just how much help we do get from our Supervisor and Union staff. They are always available for advice on equipment, buildings, staff etc., for committees to turn to when needed. But there are other benefits.[30]

The report goes on to refer to first aid equipment supplied via the Union, to the staff reference library, to the lending library of children's books and records, to the monthly staff meetings, to supervisors' assistance with day-to-day problems, and to their insistence on the maintenance of standards.

Most committees were now 'local' in the commonly accepted sense of that term. Most were composed of parents of children attending or about to attend a kindergarten, and the personnel of most changed every year or two years. Some committee members, especially those of the plethora of new kindergartens established in the 1950s and 1960s, did not, like the Dobson committee, understand the Union, its value, or its purpose. Why should they pay an affiliation fee? Why was there need for a supervisor? Why should the Union recommend a director to them when they were perfectly capable of choosing their own?

With the object of meeting some of these queries, Miss Paul in 1963 persuaded the Union to agree to a system of publications to be sent out periodically—there were five issues in the first year, 1965—to all Union kindergartens.[31] These were news sheets aimed to educate all parents, but especially committee members, on the role of Union, director and committee—all co-operating in a child's pre-school education. As Director of Pre-School Activities, Miss Paul frequently used her annual report to enlighten her audience and readers on the background, policy, and aims of the Union.[32]

On a personal level, the link between Union and kindergartens was provided by the supervisors. Supervisors were required to keep watch over, assist, and advise both local committees and kindergarten staff. In the post-World War II period, when the KTC could no longer provide sufficient trained staff for all Victorian kindergartens, not even Union kindergartens, which perforce often employed state-trained infant or primary teachers as well as kindergarteners from overseas, the task of advising and guiding directors assumed special importance. In 1962, for instance, there were 37 KTC diplomates employed in Union kindergartens and 44 staff members with other qualifications; by 1966 the balance had swung the other way and there were 37 KTC diplomates to 27 others (figures which also reveal, of course, an increasing number of unqualified assistants). By 1970 the proportion was better still: of 112 teachers, 84—or 75 per cent—had KTC diplomas.[33] But close and frequent supervision was necessary for the 28 non-KTC teachers, as well as for the KTC's own young diplomates who needed advice and support not only in their day-to-day handling of children, but also in their dealings with local committees.

Supervisors also had the task of integrating kindergarten teachers into the pre-school world, a task especially important for those with infant or primary training or with overseas qualifications.[34] The nature of a director's work tended to isolate her, far more than a teacher in a school, from companionship and communication and a sense of participation in the main stream of education. Because of this, the Union's Director of Pre-School Activities and her supervisors organized monthly staff meetings for metropolitan staff and occasional regional conferences in the larger provincial centres for country staff.[35] Here the general trends in pre-school education might be discussed, or methods of coping with particular childhood problems, or ways of approach to committees. This constant communication between staff and supervisors climaxed in 1969 in the rebuilt Boroondara Kindergarten in Richmond where a 'teacher training centre' was established as a kind of informal, demonstration, in-service course; infant or primary teachers or mature kindergarteners 'needing a fillip', as Miss Paul expressed it, could spend a week or two there—provided their committees agreed, and were able, to pay a relieving teacher to cover their absence—gaining fresh experience and insights into kindergarten methods under the Boroondara director. This development received fresh impetus in 1970 when Miss Moorhead returned from London where she had made a special study of similar centres overseas; it was another 'pioneering venture' for the FKU, at that time the only one of its kind in Australia.[36]

It is arguable that the 'pioneering venture' never quite lived up to the high hopes of its initiators. The needs of the largely migrant community, laced with severely disadvantaged Australian-born families, were very great, and the pressure on trained staff was heavy. Certainly, a constant stream of visitors—staff of other kindergartens, students, and interested outsiders—saw in action at Boroondara a 'needy', multiracial, inner-suburban kindergarten, and became aware of its problems but they did not always find the 'model' kindergarten which the Union hoped they would observe there. The social, educational, or linguistic incapacity of most parents threw a heavy burden on a small group of 'outside' committee members and on the trained staff. There was a tendency, amid the rush and strain of daily sessions, for staff to cope as best they could—and that was most capably—with immediate needs and crises, rather than to sit down quietly with their committee and the Union to analyse problems and evolve and adopt long-term, overall methods of meeting them. The situation, in fact, revealed a weakness in the training of kindergarteners—namely, that their increasingly theoretical course in pre-school education with less practical experience than formerly had not fitted them to be directors. Their teaching of and relationship with pre-school children were excellent, but their training had not equipped them to take an overall view of the situation, initiate a broad course of action or strategy, and then direct other staff members to implement it tactically.

The other main duty of a supervisor was to make and maintain close, friendly relations with the ever-changing personnel of local committees. She was always available to advise and assist, to recommend staff, to confer about buildings, equipment, or playground, to discuss anything from the thorny problem of contributions to the siting of a new climbing frame or the type of tree or shrub best suited to a particular spot.

The supervisors fully supported their Director of Pre-School Activities, faithfully attending , usually with one or more executive members, annual meetings of the 25 or so kindergartens under their care, and usually speaking to the committee and other parents there on the Union's role and the services which the Union offered. It was the necessity of attending these meetings and the consequent time taken in travelling and the weariness of too many working nights which led Miss Paul to warn the Union in 1965 that soon, unless it could afford more supervisors, it would have to limit affiliations.[37] A year later, when the number of affiliations had risen from 58 to 62, she raised the matter again, asking if the Union 'should continue to accept more kindergartens in affiliation'.[38] From the start of 1967, in response to Miss Paul's urging, the Union employed another supervisor, part-time, raising the supervisory staff to three-and-a-half.[39] Expenses consequently rose again.

But the addition of a part-time supervisor was not the only action the Union took in order to maintain its ratio of supervisors to kindergarteners. Sometimes applications for affiliation had to be refused, and this was done, sadly but sensibly, on a geographical basis. This is well documented in the case of Keon Park, a suburb to the north of Melbourne, some five miles beyond the nearest Union kindergarten, Batman Park in Northcote. This kindergarten, previously associated with the Baptist Church which withdrew from kindergarten work in the area, applied for affiliation late in 1968.[40] 'Having considered the request from the Keon Park Kindergarten Committee and taking into account the fact that the FKU has almost reached the maximum number of kindergartens which can be supervised by the present staff', the education committee recommended that the request be not granted, and that new affiliations be limited to kindergartens 'in greater proximity to those already being supervised'. The executive regretfully agreed with this recommendation and the next annual report stated the new Union policy of trying to accept affiliations only in areas 'where the work is already established. We have no centres on the far north side of Melbourne'.[41] What an admission for an organization which had prided itself on going ahead, on pioneering in areas of need!

This brings us to consideration of the whereabouts of the many new Union affiliates of the 1960s and early 1970s.[42] Between 1960 and 1973, 41 new kindergartens were affiliated with the Union. Of these, slightly less than half, 18, were in country towns, and 23 in Melbourne suburbs. Looking first at country kindergartens, it is noticeable that kindergartens were affiliated only if they were in centres where the Union already operated. By far the biggest expansion, twelve of the eighteen, was in Geelong where kindergartens were opened at Norlane-North Shore and North Geelong (1962), Fyan's Park (1965), Newcombe (1967), Highton, Lara, Whittington, and William Parker Memorial (1968), Bell Post Hill (1969), Grovedale (1970), and Kirralee and Corio (1972). Two new kindergartens were opened in both Colac and Horsham where again there was already supervision available; these were in Colac East and Wydinia (1968) and in Horsham, Natimuk Road (1965) and Bennet Road (1967). There was a new Union kindergarten also at Ballarat, Midlands (1965), and at Maryborough, Californian Gully (1963). The Union continued to supervise its existing country kindergartens at Bairnsdale, Euroa, Castlemaine, and Mildura.

It is instructive to notice that the Victorian Housing Commission was active in all these country towns. For instance, in Geelong by 1968 there were nearly 5000 commission dwellings, in Ballarat nearly 800, and in Horsham between 500 and 600.[43]

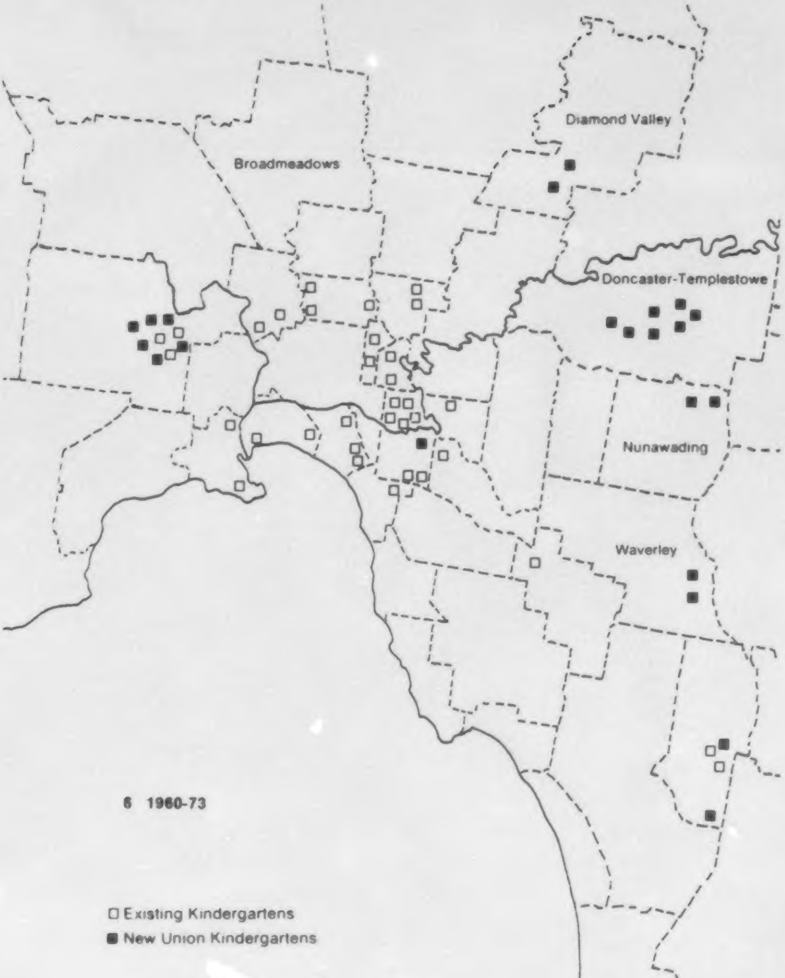
The 23 new metropolitan kindergartens divide themselves into three distinct groups. Firstly there is a large cluster to the west of Melbourne in the Sunshine area; secondly a much smaller cluster to the south-east of Melbourne, in and beyond Dandenong; and thirdly a big quadrant of kindergartens east of Melbourne, from Waverley and Ashwood to Blackburn, Doncaster, and Park Orchards, on to Lower Plenty, Rosanna, and Montmorency. This third group of kindergartens represents quite a new phenomenon in the Union story; they were founded by local committees of young parents in the middle-income bracket who moved out to the pleasant hill country on Melbourne's eastern fringe in the decades after World War II. They were not needy; they certainly were not ill-educated; they were rarely New Australians. They formed and ran competently their own committees, usually enjoying good relations with their supervisor and causing few worries to the Union—except on the odd occasion when perhaps they wished to reject a director recommended by the Union.[44] The chief anxiety in such areas seems to have been too many children; it was with these eastern suburban kindergartens that the Union had to insist most firmly on its teacher/child ratio. The kindergarten at Rosanna left the Union in 1972 after a disagreement about the enrolment of children.[45] It was restraint, rather than support, that this group of kindergartens needed.

By contrast, the small group of kindergartens in the outer Dandenong area and the very large group in and around Sunshine required a great deal of support and guidance. The educational background of some committee members made it difficult for them to cope with the duties of secretary, such as writing an annual report, and particularly of treasurer. It was to meet this need that the Union undertook to deal with the income tax and superannuation of kindergarten staff.[46] Furthermore, families, many living in Housing Commission estates, sometimes in casual employment, often battling to pay the rent, usually required more advice and counselling than their eastern counterparts. Or at least their needs were more evident and they were not ashamed to ask. The kindergarten staff and the supervisor were still looked up to, to some extent, as wiser, better trained; in the eastern suburbs they were regarded rather as fellow professionals, as equals; experts—yes, but merely in a different sphere.

The sketch map overleaf shows at a glance the position of metropolitan kindergartens which affiliated between 1960 and 1973. It illustrates the account of the last few paragraphs; it also shows graphically the Union policy, enunciated in 1968 but seemingly followed earlier, albeit tacitly, of accepting affiliates only from areas where the work was already established. Recall that, when the 1960s began, there were already two kindergartens in the south-east area, Dandenong and Dandenong West; three in the western area, Dobson, Sunshine, and Sunshine East; and that the first eastern area kindergarten, Doncaster East, opened at the beginning of 1960. No new areas were opened up.

Two areas were notably devoid of Union activity and influence. The first was a crescent, southwards down the shores of Port Phillip from St Kilda and eastwards from Hughesdale and Dandenong; yet, as early as 1953, this was a rapidly developing area, much of it light industrial, where the Housing Commission had already built 1700 homes[47] and where its operations were to continue as far afield as Frankston. The second major area where the Union did not function was a huge, wedge-shaped segment to the north, beyond Brunswick and Northcote, and across from the Greensborough region in the east to the Calder Highway in the west. There was already a Union kindergarten (Annie Dennis) in the older part of Northcote, and a new one was opened at Batman Park in 1953; in the previous year two new affiliated kindergartens had been opened in Brunswick (Denzil Don and Glenlyon Road). Beyond this, Union influence did not reach northwards, though the area included the big new working-class suburbs of Broadmeadows, Lalor, and Thomastown where, in an earlier generation, one would not have failed to find the Union and where the Housing Commission built several large estates in the 1960s.

But the Union's hands were tied by shortage of money. Its supervisors were very close to the maximum acceptable load; the Union was not prepared to lower its standards, as the Health Department had been forced to, by shortage of funds, so that it was 'unable to provide the number of supervisors needed to give adequate supervision'.[48]


Diamond Valley
Broadmeadows
Doncaster-Templestowe
Nunawading
Waverley

6 1960-73

□ Existing Kindergartens
■ New Union Kindergartens

The traditional centres of Union activity in the old, inner suburbs still demanded a great deal of time and effort. Two of the Union's oldest affiliates, Lady Northcote at Montague and the Carlton Free Kindergarten, had closed in the 1950s; a much newer kindergarten, Bellfield in West Heidelberg, closed at the end of 1961 because of falling numbers. Other kindergartens were now active in this Housing Commission area originally pioneered by the Union ten years before, and it was not in one of the areas where Union supervisors could oversee a group of kindergartens. All other inner, older kindergartens remained, and a new one—Horace Petty in Prahran—was opened in 1968.

At the time of the closing of Montague and Carlton, it seemed that the movement of population away from the inner suburbs might lead to the closure of more such kindergartens. Certainly, the population in areas like South Melbourne, Collingwood, Richmond and Fitzroy was declining. Several double-unit kindergartens now took only one group of children; others had trouble enrolling sufficient children to meet the departmental conditions of subsidy.[49] A former Union social worker, Mrs Chris. Sleswick, who had held the same position earlier (1951–56) returned to the Union in 1963; in her first annual report she considered changes which had occurred during her absence, and her comments are interesting.[50] In 1956, she said, there was no longer the pressure of children waiting for admission which had long been a feature of inner kindergartens. True, as Australian working-class families moved out towards the north, west, and south-east of Melbourne, migrant families took their places; but these groups were not familiar with and not so ready to avail themselves of kindergarten services. Now, in the early 1960s, she saw the trend being reversed as the Victorian Government, through the Housing Commission, went ahead with its schemes of rebuilding inner, depressed areas with huge blocks of flats, some walk-up, many high-rise. People would soon be moving into these flats, many of them families with young children, and Mrs Sleswick saw them as presenting a new way of life to Australian families; there would be a lack of safe playing areas—no longer the familiar 'back yard'—and confined living space would mean increased stress for the mother with two or three young children. She urged the Union to consider carefully its policy in such areas.

The Union, and Miss Paul in particular, needed no urging. As early as September 1962 the executive had agreed to write to the Housing Commission pointing out 'the desirability of provision of space in housing areas for pre-school centres'.[51] The Housing Commission, however, was slow-moving. Two years later the executive commented with alarm on 'the influx of families into the Horace Petty Estate in the South Yarra area and on the probable large increase in the number of pre-school children'.[52] In the same month, the Union

M

president, Miss Paul, and another executive member made a visit to the new North Richmond housing estate and the nearby Boroondara Kindergarten where they watched appalled as a passing truck driver stopped and shepherded to safety a group of tiny children playing on a busy road. The Union wrote direct to the Minister of Housing; at least, they felt, if an enclosed play space were provided, mothers in the housing estate could, if they wished, roster themselves to supervise it. Clearly no mother in an upstairs flat could supervise children playing several storeys below.

By early 1965 Miss Paul could report to the executive that at last the 'Housing Commission's attitude is changing regarding the provision of social amenities in Housing Estates'. The Union, she felt, must now 'press for a kindergarten in every housing estate'.[53] She pointed out that the cost of a kindergarten would be no more than the cost of one estate flat.[54] It was, and indeed always had been, within the power of the Housing Commission to provide what Miss Paul called 'social amenities', as a delegate pointed out at the Union Council meeting of March 1965.[55] She quoted the relevant Act:

> The Commission may set apart any land for gardens, parks, open spaces, or places of recreation, erect buildings (additional to houses) which (in the opinion of the Commission) are necessary or desirable for the development of any area where the Commission is building houses or for the requirements of residents of any such area.

As usual in such legislation the operative word was 'may'; it was permissive only.

The situation in inner Housing Commission areas and the policy proposed by Miss Paul, and ultimately adopted by the Union, were clearly and succinctly set out by Miss Paul in March 1965:

> Observations of activities among young children living in the North Richmond Housing Estate adjoining Boroondara Free Kindergarten raise the question as to whether enough is being done to provide for suitable, safe playing facilities for young children in these estates. Although the school-aged child is outside our domain this group should also be included for provision.
>
> From what we have seen it seems that the nature of living in these multiple-storied flats tends to subject young children under 3 years to being sent to play without supervision and that too early they begin to experience lack of control. The safety hazards of such a situation are serious. Twenty-storied flats are being envisaged for future development and although it is said families with young children will not be housed beyond a certain height, it is felt social problems of a special nature, including isolation, could arise for pre-school children living in such conditions.
>
> Attempts to provide recreational facilities for children in Housing Commission Estates around Melbourne have in many cases not been successful mainly because of lack of supervision. After careful consideration, it is submitted that we should ask for the provision of a kindergarten in every Estate where families with young children reside. Flats are costing approximately £7500 each to build in some of the

> Estates. One kindergarten could be provided for the cost of one flat. Kindergartens are always staffed and are never open if unattended; when closed are securely locked. They not only provide play facilities for the children but may be regarded as adult education centres for the parents and adults. Most kindergartens succeed in gaining such a type of respect and co-operation from the parents, that the kindergarten could be a most valuable agency for building up the sort of community spirit which would promote the welfare of property etc. common to the Estate.

It should be noted that here it was not Housing Commission areas generally which were being considered. In outer areas, the Dandenong-Doveton area and the Sunshine-St Albans-Albion district, as at Fishermen's Bend earlier and Chadstone in the 1950s, the Commission provided detached or semi-detached homes, each with its own enclosed garden or yard; it was the development of commission flats, and especially of high-rise flats which now concerned the Union. As late as the middle of 1966 the Union's Annual Report stated that, despite all their efforts, there was no provision made 'at the drawing-board stage' for kindergarten facilities in South Melbourne, North Richmond, Port Melbourne, or Prahran 'where housing projects are increasing the population greatly and rapidly'.[56]

Representations concerning the Horace Petty Estate in Prahran/South Yarra presently bore fruit. Space was provided under one of the blocks of flats and a Union kindergarten opened there early in 1968, planned by the Commission, equipped by the Union, and financed by the Prahran City Council. This was not, physically, an ideal situation. Only a few months later there were reports of 'articles thrown from windows of the twelve storeys above the playground'[57]; while in July the kindergarten director was absent for a time having been hit by a bucket of water thrown from one of the flats.[58] The Commission was obliged to instal 'non-opening windows' in the flats overlooking the kindergarten playground. Still, what might be called the first high-rise kindergarten had been achieved.[59]

In North Richmond where the old Boroondara Kindergarten had been requiring more and more maintenance and was fast approaching the term of its natural life, the Union was unable to persuade the Housing Commission to adopt a similar plan.[60] The Union itself decided therefore to rebuild the kindergarten on the same site to serve the area. The total cost was $34 450 of which $10 000 came from the Victorian Government, $4000 from a legacy, $3600 from funds held in trust by the Union from the former Burnley Kindergarten, and the rest from donations—some from charitable trusts and some from private donors or companies, mostly unable to resist the appeal of Helen Paul, both urgent and sincere.[61] The kindergarten was closed during most of 1968 while the former building was demolished and an imaginative new centre built. The condition of 'the families living in the North Richmond area in the congested housing estate nearby' were taken into account, and a pleasant meeting room was provided for parents, as well as space in the larger-than-average kitchen where mothers could sit and chat and watch their children at play. Outside was a natural Australian 'bush garden'—a welcome relief from the 'concrete jungle' where most of the families lived.[62] The new Boroondara was opened late in 1968, and was used, as already mentioned, also as a teachers centre.

Miss Paul did not overstate the case when she explained the problem of inner-suburban kindergartens in her 1965 report:

> Most of these have been functioning for 40 years and upwards. Buildings have deteriorated. Committees have not the thousands of pounds needed for renovations, and indeed are advised by their architects against this course. The Kindergartens referred to are in Richmond, Collingwood, South Melbourne and Port Melbourne. At one stage a few years ago it would appear that the growth of industry would gradually make Kindergartens unnecessary in these areas, as houses gave way to factories. However, a complete change has come over the programme for housing in the inner metropolitan area. Transport problems are making it necessary that the inner areas be developed. The Housing Commission now has extensive plans for multiple-storeyed flats, even to the height of 30 storeys. This high-density housing has brought a new clientele to the old Kindergartens. But it has not so far brought any solution to their building problems.
>
> The fact is that practically all these buildings should be demolished and rebuilt. We would make a deep plea that not one of them should be abandoned, as in many cases they are either adjacent or very close to housing estates or projected estates.[63]

At Port Melbourne, the Lady Forster Kindergarten was rapidly sinking into the swampy land on which it was built, formerly a billabong near the mouth of the Yarra, and as it sank the child population of the area was rising with the opening of more Housing Commission flats. The Town Clerk shrewdly surmised that this rise was likely to continue as increasing transport costs persuaded people to return from or resist moving to outer suburban areas.[64] Only $3000 was received from the Victorian Government for a new building. A double-unit kindergarten opened on the original site in 1968; the local municipal council contributed substantially to the cost.[65]

Lillian Cannam, near new Housing Commission flats in South Melbourne, desperately required more land for play space, and this was finally provided by the local council.[66] The Isabel Henderson Kindergarten in Fitzroy faced increasing problems of traffic noise and pollution; it needed either to expand or relocate to meet the needs of another housing estate, expected to house 2000 people including some 120 pre-school children.[67] In Collingwood the old Mission Kindergarten needed major rebuilding and maintenance; in 1966 there were barely enough children to keep the kindergarten open, but two years later parents were clamouring to have their children admitted.[68] The Rita May Harris Kindergarten in Keele Street, already in bad repair, became virtually untenable with the widening of Hoddle Street. By arrangement with the Commission, therefore, it moved to quarters under the Collingwood high-rise flats where a double unit was opened early in 1973.[69]

Far more worrying, however, than problems of bricks and mortar, play space and location, were problems of personnel. Where were the local committees which in the new eastern suburban kindergartens were gathered from educated professional parents? Consider the following family described by the Union social worker in 1960.

> This family consists of the parents in their early 30s and 7 children under 8 years of age. The mother came to the Kindergarten Director in Brunswick asking for help in placing the children in homes so that she could go to work in order to supplement the father's income and save money for a deposit on a home. I found the family had two bedrooms and the use of the kitchen in a miserable old semi-detached house, where they were sub-tenants of the paternal grandparents, both of whom were heavy drinkers. The children irritated the elderly couple who had given them a solicitor's letter ordering them to leave within a week and threatening them with a Court eviction.[70]
>
> Both parents wanted to keep the children and were affectionate and responsible parents, with a good relationship to each other and with the children. The father had held the same job for five years, but was earning only £17/11/- a week. They had previously had a Commission home at a rental of £3/10/- per week for two years. Through illness and the difficulty of feeding and clothing a family adequately on a low wage, they had only paid ¾ of their rent over this period, and finally were evicted as they owed £32. Apart from this they were satisfactory tenants. Enquiries showed that they had no hope of obtaining another Commission dwelling unless they paid arrears in full, in which case they would be placed on a waiting list and would have to wait about three years for a home or flat. Had someone advised and made representations for them, the rent would probably have been reduced and the eviction averted.

Innumerable problems impinging on the Union's sphere of interest are raised here: housing, social security, family counselling . . .; in addition the extract makes it clear that some parents were not promising committee material. Yet there were many families like this one, people in need of support, incapable of much self-help.

Traditionally, the older, inner kindergartens had been run by committees from outside the district—spiritual descendants of the original philanthropic founders. Little by little, as a new generation of 'haves' arose in the 'better' suburbs, some without the old sense of 'noblesse oblige', others emancipated and pursuing their own careers, others intent on different causes like conserving the environment or saving the whale, the old type of committee member became harder to find. Parent committees were often formed, and received steady support from the Union through the supervisor. The job was taxing and the anxiety often considerable, but a majority of kindergartens possessed parents of the ability and experience to manage reasonably well. Not so in the inner areas. For one thing financial problems were worse there, exacerbated by the fact that in older buildings maintenance costs were inevitably high, and renovation, alteration or even complete rebuilding were often necessary. In addition there were problems of parents unused to committee work, to organization, to accounts and reports; most of these people were employees, not employers; they could not reasonably be expected to take on, as committee members, the role of employer of a kindergarten director and other staff. Father on shift work, mother in a part- or full-time job—these things made the problem worse. To pour milk, cut up oranges, wash plates and glasses was one thing; to run a kindergarten was quite another. Miss Paul commented on the difficulties of inner kindergartens in 1966, saying bluntly that it was 'unsuitable for the local mothers to serve on committees'.[71]

In her annual report of the following year she went into more detail:

> [Inner kindergartens] were at a disadvantage because the local parent committees lack the necessary continuity and experience to take on full management responsibility . . . The result is that the kindergartens where the child's need is greatest have a struggle to exist.[72]

A year later she virtually repeated her comment[73], listing the 'needy' kindergartens as Boroondara, Dame Nellie Melba, Rita May Harris, Collingwood Mission, Lillian Cannam, South Melbourne Mission, Ada Mary a'Beckett, and Lady Forster. She even suggested that 'an over-all committee and/or auxiliary for inner suburban kindergartens'[74] might be formed. This did not eventuate, but some executive members, notably Mrs Helen a'Beckett at Ada Mary a'Beckett and Lady Forster, Mrs Patsy Walford at Rita May Harris, and Mrs Janice Bate at Boroondara, stepped into the breach as presidents of local committees to provide leadership and training for local parents.[75]

Lack of experience and training was compounded in Housing Commission areas by the rapid turnover of population. In most kindergartens, committees were new, or partly new, annually; this was bad enough, and it was in an attempt to deal with this lack of continuity that the Union began producing and distributing parents news sheets and Advice to Committees. In areas where most parents lived in commission flats, 'constant movement of tenants' provided 'little stability for the Committee of Management'.[76]

The gradually increasing number of migrant parents in the community added to the anxieties of kindergartens in inner areas. This development had many side-effects. In the first place, many migrant families were not accustomed to the idea of kindergarten; a child might stay at home with mother or with an extended family including aunts and grandparents, or, if mother were working, he might go to a child-minding centre. But the idea of kindergarten, of an educational institution for pre-school children, was alien to most newcomers from southern and eastern Europe. Mrs Sleswick made one of the first statements on migrant children recorded by the Union when she reported in 1963 on a study of the kindergarten community and its needs in the Boroondara area. She found:

> ... a high proportion of Greek and Italian migrants. The former do not make application to attend kindergartens but are minded at home, whilst some Italians are catered for in Roman Catholic kindergartens and in Day Nurseries.[77]

A simple prediction, based on crude birth rate, could not therefore give a reliable estimate of how many children would be wanting kindergarten places in 3–4 years time; but, on the other hand, Mrs Sleswick noted that many migrants moved on from Richmond, their 'first home', as their economic condition improved. Would the families who replaced them require kindergarten places? Would the families who moved out require places in their new suburbs, perhaps to the west of Melbourne?

Two years later Mrs Sleswick considered a similar problem in Prahran where there were 1000 births a year; but many of these babies were born to Greek parents and 'many of the mothers are working and are not interested in a kindergarten service'.[78]

Yet by no means all migrant families shunned the kindergarten, once the institution and its value was made known to them. In 1970 the Annual Report noted that among 26 children at the Rita May Harris Kindergarten only four were Australian, the rest being Greek, Italian, Macedonian, and Yugoslav.[79] There is no need to reiterate the sort of problems raised by a situation like this for the formation and functioning of a local committee. The 'various nationalities' which had been remarked 60 years before at the old City Crèche Kindergarten paled into insignificance in post-World War II Melbourne; at least in 1910 a committee was not expected to be geographically 'local'.

The Union did not, in the 1960s, come to grips with the provision of services for migrant families: its entry into that field was to await the 1970s, and the story of this venture belongs to the final chapter. Even bare references to migrants are scarce in the 1960s. This does not indicate that the Union was oblivious; it means that it was firstly busy, secondly short of money, and thirdly concerned with another problem so closely allied as to be often inextricable—the problem of the 'working mum'.

Many mothers did not send, or want to send, their children to kindergarten. Was this because they were southern Europeans? Or because they were working mothers? Did they work because they were southern Europeans? Or did they work from economic necessity? If so, should the Union insist on its customary three-hour program for four-year-olds and a shorter program on some afternoons for younger children? This, according to traditional theory was the ideal—but what about the children? Were they to be consigned to day nurseries? Or left with neighbours or relatives? Or allowed to roam the streets?

In 1966 Mrs Ethleen King, then Union president, attended a 'Women at Work' conference.[80] She reported to the executive that, according to figures given at the conference, most women worked between the ages of 19 and 24, that many returned to the work-force after the age of 35, that most returned after the age of 45, and that 'a quite small percentage of mothers with young children worked; many of those who did were widowed, deserted or divorced'. These facts are presumably true, but one cannot help wondering what percentage of the 'quite small percentage' came from poorer families in districts which the Union had traditionally tried to service. It is noticeable that many inner kindergartens did not, in fact, retain their conventional three-hour program unchanged. By 1969 a 'lunch and rest' program was operating at Collingwood Mission, Lillian Cannam, Isabel Henderson, and South Melbourne Mission; in 1972 Rita May Harris Kindergarten joined these ranks.[81]

It is easy to criticize the Union for persisting, in the face of great difficulties, in retaining, rebuilding, staffing, and organizing committees for inner suburban kindergartens, when the apparent wish and need of a considerable number of young parents in these areas—Australians and migrants alike—was for full day care in a day nursery. But this is to miss the whole raison d'être of the kindergarten. It is not, as the Union's founders had frequently declared, a child-minding but an educational institution, and it is to be staffed not by nursery-maids or play-leaders or kindly proxy-aunts, but by professional preschool teachers trained in the theory and practice of child development and skilled at dealing with the child in, and with, his family. The early conflict between kindergarten and crèche was being re-enacted. The crèche was cheaper to run, for some parents it was an economic necessity, for others a convenience; but, per se, it had nothing to do with education

Which brings us to that section of the Union's personnel so far neglected in this chaper, the staff of the kindergartens. A gradually increasing proportion of these young teachers was being trained at the KTC as the number of students whom the College could accommodate increased.[82] There were 115 students in training in 1961, and 188 in 1965[82] when the College became autonomous. The severing of bonds between Union and College which had not been achieved by outright transfer to either the Health or the Education Department in the 1950s was finally achieved by the two institutions for themselves, by a process of gradual and amicable devolution. After the failure of the Bolte government to proclaim the legislation of 1956—a decision not made known to the Union till November 1957—the Union agreed to continue administering the College, with an increased government grant, 'for one year'.[83] The one year became, in fact, eight years. Both Union and College fully realized that the Union was no longer the appropriate body to have sole responsibility for the training of Victoria's kindergarten teachers. It was agreed, therefore, to increase the authority and broaden the scope of the College Council, and late in 1959 a new College constitution was approved by the Union Council.[84]

Under this constitution the College Council enjoyed a greater degree of independence in matters pertaining to purely educational affairs, such as staff and curriculum; also it was enlarged and broadened to include representatives of all the pre-school organizations—the Australian Pre-School Association and the church pre-school associations—as well as other educational representatives, including one from the Victorian Education Department.[85] The College continued, without success, the Union's efforts to persuade the Health Department to increase the value of departmental bursaries to students.

The financial burden of the College no longer fell on the Union; indeed, Dr W.C. Radford, M.B.E., College Chairman 1959-64, expressly stated in 1961 that the College was working strictly within a known budget, believing that it was no longer 'the obligation of the Union to meet any deficiencies'.[86] The nexus both of finance and personnel between the two institutions was thus gradually dissolving, and in March 1963 the Union Council, on the recommendation of the executive, agreed that the College should become fully autonomous.[87] Dr Radford assured the Union that its pioneering work in establishing the College and its long and continuing concern for and interest in pre-school education would not be forgotten, and that 'there would never be a time when the FKU is not represented'. Only two Union Council members opposed the motion for full autonomy on the ground that 'without the protection of the FKU the College could expect to submit to outside pressure and direction'—a prescient remark in the light of later events.

Legal formalities were protracted, but the College finally became a separate entity on 4 August 1965 as the Melbourne Kindergarten Teachers' College (MKTC).[88] Shortly afterwards the Kew property, the nucleus of which had been purchased by the Union in 1921, passed formally into College ownership.

As in the previous decade, not nearly all the College graduates were available to fill vacancies in Union kindergartens; the church kindergarten organizations still provided bursaries for students who then taught in their kindergartens; the Health Department still provided bursaries, still grossly inadequate, and sent its graduates to departmentally supervised kindergartens. The Union still had difficulty in the 1960s in filling vacancies in country kindergartens, and also those in remoter suburbs.[89] Sunshine was particularly difficult to staff, as most kindergarten students were still drawn from the better-off eastern suburbs where families could at least make good the difference between a departmental bursary and the sum needed to keep body and soul together. In 1966, therefore, the Sunshine Council provided an annual bursary for a local girl to train and then return to one of the six Union kindergartens in the district. Miss Paul confided to the Union executive that this was the first bursary offered for kindergarten training which 'approaches the value of those offered by the Education Department'.[90]

In an effort to improve the qualifications of infant and primary teachers who were perforce employed as kindergarten teachers, the College introduced in-service training for such teachers—a one-year course for staff without formal pre-school qualifications.[91] Such infant and primary teachers, according to the principal's annual report in 1962, realized their inadequacy in dealing with pre-school children; the course was designed to 'prevent pre-school work becoming a downward extension of Grade I' and to ensure that it was 'built up on the play and growth needs of the young child'. In 1965 the College also introduced a post-diploma course—not a 'refresher' course, but a course specifically designed to train those who might become supervisors or teachers of kindergarten trainees.[92] One of its first members was Heather Moorhead. Both the teachers in-service course and the post-diploma course proved very popular, with enrolments of 40 and 9 respectively in the first year of College independence.[93]

After a hectic period of expansion and rebuilding, the College under the wise, calm guidance of Miss Heather Lyon (principal 1952–76) and Miss Florence Kendall (vice-principal 1956–80) was capable by the end of the decade of taking 450 students, 150 in each of three years.[94] The students' educational qualifications were gradually rising, though Matriculation (later HSC) was not insisted on as an entry pre-requisite until 1973. Matriculation had, however, been preferred for some years before this, and a declining proportion of applicants had only a Year 11 pass. This was a change indeed from the days of Mary Gutteridge who had sometimes to accept girls with only five Year 10 subjects.

The change in entry prerequisite was made when the MKTC became the Institute of Early Childhood Development (IECD), a constituent member of the State College of Victoria, in 1973. The FKU was not represented on the new IECD Council; the assurance given in 1963 had lasted only eight years. The Union's present Director of Pre-School Activities, in fact, has a seat on the Council, but in her own right as an expert in pre-school education, not as a representative of the Union.

Two interesting changes in Union policy are connected with the physical and numerical expansion of the College. For years, kindergartens had relied on infant and primary teachers to supplement the insufficient supply of KTC diplomates, and it was to provide pre-school training for this essential component of kindergarten staff that the in-service course was introduced in 1962. At the end of the following year, the Union announced that it was dropping its long-standing policy of readvertising staff positions held by non-kindergarten diplomates, which it described as 'invidious'.[95] This was tacit recognition that the Union kindergarten system could not function without a considerable proportion of non-KTC staff, and it was made possible by the in-service course which meant that such women could now receive pre-school training. Towards the end of the 1960s, however, as the supply of diplomates from the College rose, it was possible to visualize a time when there would be sufficient diplomates to fill *all* kindergarten positions. The 1963 policy reversal was again reversed; committees were asked to re-advertise yearly positions held by infant or primary teachers. Preference was to be given to trained pre-school teachers and to those who had done the in-service course.[96] This was in 1969 when 75 per cent of directors in Union kindergartens had a KTC qualification. This policy was again modified during the 1970s so that kindergarten positions held by staff with other than specific pre-school qualifications were advertised only at the end of the first year of appointment. If a committee was satisfied with the director they no longer had to make her position available annually to a trained kindergartener.

As the 1960s gave way to the 1970s, the increasing number of trained kindergarteners available to staff kindergartens was almost the only bright spot on a very dark pre-school horizon. In 1971 there were, for the first time for many years, no new affiliations because of the desperate financial situation. The Union appeared to have reached the limits of expansion; need remained, but there was no money to meet it.[97] In 1970 Union expenditure was $32 000 and the deficit $7000; a year later it was nearly $11 000. The Union persisted; there were still standards to be maintained—not merely the standards already considered at some length of teacher to child and supervisor to kindergarten, but quite elementary things like physical standards. For instance, the health regulations required a minimum of 70 square feet of play space per child in any place registered to care for pre-school children; in line with an APA recommendation, the Union required 200 square feet.[98] Nor did Union and Department always see eye-to-eye on building requirements. Early in the 1960s, the Department did not even consult with the Union supervisors before passing or amending a committee's plans for buildings or alterations; at Dobson Kindergarten in Maidstone, for instance, in 1962 the Union described the departmentally approved toilet block as 'far from satisfactory'.[99] In the following year the Department agreed to consult with the Union[100], an agreement not always observed. Furthermore, though departmental regulations required a departmental inspector to visit a kindergarten after completion but before occupation, Miss Paul found that inspection could be delayed for up to 18 months.[101] This was clearly unsatisfactory for a child who might have moved on to school before his kindergarten was opened. It would also involve a kindergarten committee in considerable unproductive expense for if a director were engaged she had to be paid, regardless of whether or not she had a kindergarten to direct. A departmental official, when this argument was put to him, described it as a 'Furphy'!

In the same year the Health Department passed plans for the South Sunshine Kindergarten which the Union considered did not come up to standard; the sink in the playroom, for example, was of adult height while, in the adult toilet, there was no wash basin at all.[102] This sort of problem seems to have been ironed out as the decade progressed, by the exercise of considerable tact and patience on the part of Miss Paul; but the Union never felt certain that the Department could be relied on to maintain standards, if left to its own devices. The Union, in short, not content with being a pioneer, was now acting as a watch-dog as well.

Another example of inadequate liaison between Department and Union occurred in the matter of medical inspection. Through a series of devoted honoraries, the Union had been responsible for this service since 1919. Now with its suburban kindergartens stretching from Sunshine to Dandenong and Doncaster, this was no longer possible and in 1964 the Union asked the Department to take over medical inspection in its kindergartens. This the Department did, having no choice; but it omitted for many months to let the Union know! Even information as to whom—Union, supervisors, or committees—medical reports were to be sent was not given.[103] The basic difficulty of the maligned Health Department, of course, was that, like the Union, it was under-staffed and under-financed; and kindergartens were after all only one tiny part of its vast responsibility.

The Union, however, was staffed by and its executive composed of women who were both competent and dedicated. The Union presidents in these years were uniformly able women: Mrs Gene Ballantyne (1960–62), Mrs Ethleen

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King, C.B.E. (1962–67), a lawyer whose qualifications were invaluable during the prolonged legal negotiations involved in the separation of Union and College, Mrs Lorna Tenny (1967–70) and Mrs Edna Gordon, O.B.E. (1970–73), two women who faced with unruffled optimism the worsening financial plight of the Union.

During this period the Union lost several of its older members, among them Mrs Ethel Southey, M.B.E. (d. 1970) and Miss Olive Dodd (d. 1968), both staunch fighters in the crisis of the 1950s; while a beloved Director, Auriole Fraser, died in 1971, remembered for 'her outstanding leadership, wise counsel and loving concern'.[104]

Pre-eminent among the salaried staff was Helen Paul, Director of Pre-School Activities from 1963 till February 1971 when she became, briefly, a supervisor under the new Director, Heather Moorhead, who still holds the position. There seems to have been no 'dead wood' in the Union; all the supervisors were well qualified, capable, and enthusiastic in their jobs: Helen Jenkins, Pauline Rogers, Lyndal Murphy, Agnes Sutherland, Anne Dreyer, Pat Cooper, and Judy Cutler.

In her reports of 1969 and 1970, Miss Paul resorted to some very plain speaking. After commenting with disapproval on the increasing contributions required from many parents, she restated the Union's objective of a free preschool service bridging the gap between infant welfare and primary school. The Union, and after it the other voluntary organizations, had shown what needed to be done, but state assistance with their administrative and supervisory expenses was now essential.[105] A precedent for such assistance existed in the subsidy paid by government to some local councils for the salaries of their pre-school officers.[106] Several approaches to the Minister of Health were unsuccessful; the Minister alleged that he was sympathetic, but unable to take helpful action 'because of pressure on the government in relation to the provision of funds for education of school-age children and also because of sharp rises in kindergarten teachers' salaries on which the subsidy is based.'[107]

At the end of 1971, an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Union Council was held[108], reminiscent of that chaired by Miss Dodd in 1955 at the time of another financial emergency. As on that occasion, the meeting began with several commendations on the valuable work of the Union. Three committee members, the Sunshine Social Welfare Director and Mrs Elvie Love, chairman of the Union's education committee, all spoke to this effect, mentioning Union guidance when a new kindergarten was being established; Union assistance to the often-confused treasurers of local committees and to committees themselves concerning educational programmes and the appointment of teachers; the contact which supervisors provided with the rest of the pre-school movement; the value of regional conferences and staff meetings; the contribution of the Union social worker; and most especially Union help for kindergartens in inner suburbs.

> In inner suburban kindergartens—because of the lack of continuity of residence, the lack of financial resources, the lack of committee experience—it is again necessary to obtain committees from other areas. This has led to these committees turning to the FKU for help so that their kindergartens may survive. Because of this important FKU service, the doors of these inner suburban kindergartens have not closed.

Mrs Tenny, chairing the meeting in Mrs Gordon's absence, then asked: 'Is all this to end because of lack of finance?' She said it was 'unthinkable' that the Union should close down. Already the departmental supervisors were unable to cope adequately with their own subsidized kindergartens, recently augmented by 38 former Presbyterian kindergartens. Nearly 90 more institutions would be added to the departmental total of 842, including both kindergartens and play-centres, if the Union closed down. This would mean an impossible 80–90 centres under the care of each departmental supervisor, and the Union knew that 30 was the maximum which could be handled satisfactorily. The Union must remain in the field, both because of its vital contemporary contribution, and because of the example and demonstration it gave of standards which it was essential to preserve.

What was to be done? Inevitably the answer was another appeal to government for 'an annual grant to the FKU to save it from closing down'. There was no doubt in anyone's mind at the meeting that the Union had to continue 'the unique service it had offered for over 63 years', that it must remain as 'a setter of standards, a path-finder, a leader in quality, techniques and patterns of work'.

Then came the anti-climax.[109] The resolution was sent post-haste to the Minister of Health. Christmas came and went; New Year passed; by late January 1972 no reply had been received. When asked, the Health Department replied that the Union resolution had been sent on to the Premier's Department. An attempt to arrange a meeting with the Premier and Treasurer, in the person of Sir Henry Bolte, failed. Finally, in March, a reply was received, not from the Premier's Department but from the Minister of Health. He promised to talk with Sir Henry before the 1972 Budget was brought down, but in the meantime could only suggest that the Union prepare a submission stating its case to be presented by the APA to the new Victorian Consultative Council on Pre-school Child Development.[110]

This was something and nothing: something because much was hoped from this Consultative Council (of which more anon), though it would be many months before its report was prepared and many more before its recommendations could be implemented; nothing because it gave no help in the Union's immediate, pressing predicament.

Predictably, when government was not forthcoming, individuals had to step in, and the latter part of 1972 and the early months of 1973 saw the Union and numerous concerned outside organizations and people rallying to the cause. The sale of Christmas cards raised $915, six theatre parties $581, the Silver Door contributed just over $1000[111], book stalls $120, and a society luncheon nearly $300, while the Glenferrie Hill Bowling Club itself contributed $550 and its afternoon-tea ladies raised $600. The Union itself realized more investments. These measures helped to keep the operating deficit down to $12 000.

On 10 August 1972 the Union executive conveyed to the Council[112] a suggestion from the Minister of Health to the effect that, if the Union were prepared to 'retrench'—bluntly, to disaffiliate some of its kindergartens—his department might then be given funds for the salary of an additional supervisor, namely the person no longer required by the truncated Union; she would become (if 'acceptable to Public Service regulations') a departmental employee. This outrageous suggestion of robbing a penniless but highly competent Peter to bolster up, quite inadequately, a poor and grossly understaffed Paul, at no extra expense but possibly some kudos to the robber, was rejected outright by the Union Council. Local committees rallied; all local MPs and some local newspapers were contacted; the APA (Victorian Branch)—of which Mrs Ethleen King, was now president—organized a meeting with the new Premier at which pre-school affairs generally, but in particular the plight of the voluntary organizations, were discussed. Finally, on 9 March 1973 a letter was received from the new Minister of Health stating that funds had been allotted to his Department by the Treasurer with which to pay 'a subsidy . . . in respect of the supervisory service provided by the Union'[113]. (The amount actually paid was equal to the salaries of 2½ supervisors and ⅓ of the salary of the Director of Pre-School Activities.)

This Treasurer was The Honourable R.J. Hamer; he was also Premier and new to the job, having taken office on 23 August 1972. Perhaps he still had ears to hear and time to listen. The long drought was over, and the relief of a thankful executive can be detected even in the formal acknowledgments in the 1973 *Annual Report*, which I quote:

> The FKU Executive wishes to record its heartfelt appreciation of the splendid efforts of many groups and persons, known and unknown, who have helped to bring about this satisfactory result. We are specially grateful for the fine support of our local FKU Kindergarten Committees, FKU members and friends, APA and other community organisations and groups who have approached their local Members of

Parliament, newspapers and other media to enlist their support of the FKU's approach for Government assistance. We also appreciate very much the efforts of those who responded to these pressures.

The FKU is greatly encouraged by the Government's decision to grant subsidy to the FKU and to the other voluntary pre-school organisations employing supervisors. This official recognition and support have spurred us on, with renewed enthusiasm, in our efforts 'to encourage the spread of free kindergartens throughout Victoria', which is one of our stated objects. At this time of transition in the pre-school movement, we believe that it is vital for the FKU to continue its work of pioneering, setting and maintaining high standards which have set the pattern for the development of kindergartens in Victoria.

Chapter 10

The Hungry Watch-dog 1973–80

This last chapter must necessarily be a chapter without an ending because the developments of the decade which it covers are still unfolding, the story still incomplete; nor can balanced assessment be made of events too close to be seen as yet in perspective.

The adoption by the Hamer government in 1974 of many recommendations of the report of the Consultative Council was welcomed by the pre-school movement throughout Victoria. The APA recorded, as a 'tremendous breakthrough'[1], the subsidizing by government of the salaries of the voluntary organizations' supervisory staff. At the same time, the College—now the IECD—welcomed the raising of the value of students' bursaries to Education Department levels.[2] Nor was this all. The Victorian Government now undertook to subsidize the salaries of untrained pre-school assistants[3], thus enabling many hard-pressed committees to reduce the contributions asked of parents.[4] In addition, the amount of the government subsidy available for pre-school buildings was raised from $6000 to $15 000.[5] The questions of subsidy to help with maintenance costs and subsidy for the salary of relief teachers remained.[6]

Another recommendation of the Consultative Council closely affected the Union. This recommendation, implemented during 1975, was for a reorganization of the Maternal, Infant and Pre-School Welfare Division of the Maternal and Child Welfare Branch of the Victorian Department of Health. This led to the formation of two divisions—one concerned with Maternal and Infant Welfare and the other with Early Childhood Education and Development.[7] The former Chief Pre-School Supervisor in the Department now became Director of Pre-School Child Development.[8] Pre-school affairs were thus upgraded to the status of an independent division within the state department.[9]

Predictably the Union was delighted with the recommendations of the Consultative Council and with their implementation, as far as it went. The small, voluntary organization, apparently close to extinction in 1972, now advanced confidently into the 1970s. In 1975 the number of Union kindergartens reached its peak at 89. In that year, the total dropped sharply to 82[10], largely because of the Health Department's new policy of 'regionalization', which resulted in four Union kindergartens at Horsham and one each at Red Cliffs, Mildura and Mount Beauty coming under direct departmental supervision. The parting was sad but sensible; valuable Union funds and the time of Union supervisors was being spent on kindergartens which could be more economically—though, it might be argued, less closely, less satisfactorily—served by departmental supervisors already working in the more distant parts of the State. Not all country kindergartens were 'regionalized' however—or should one say 'rationalized'? The existing Union kindergartens in the Colac and Geelong areas, for instance, remained (with the one exception of Norlane-North Shore which disaffiliated in 1976 because of a refusal to abide by Union standards); some more isolated kindergartens like Euroa also remained with the Union. Even further away was Bairnsdale, the only Union kindergarten more than 100 miles from Melbourne; its committee firmly refused to disaffiliate.

The Health Department recognized the Union as a 'region' in itself, though clearly the term is not used in any geographical sense. In fact the Union region represents many different types of community, and its kindergartens can still serve as models of the different type of service and programs suitable for children and families in different economic and social situations. There are many Union kindergartens in larger provincial centres; some in isolated, smaller country towns like Bairnsdale; many in outer suburban areas, both well-to-do as in the eastern suburbs, and less financially secure as in the west and south-east; and, of course, there remains the 'hard core' where the Union began, in the now dramatically changed inner suburbs.

Union kindergarten numbers had risen to 84 by 1978 with the addition of two suburban kindergartens at Burnley and Hampton Park[11]; this was still the total in 1980. In the Union itself there were various changes of personnel, most importantly the appointment of Miss Heather Moorhead as Director of Pre-School Activities in 1971[12], and the election of Miss Helen Paul as president in 1973.[13] Miss Paul, who was awarded an M.B.E. in 1974[14], held this office till 1976 when she was replaced by Mrs Lorna Tenny[15] who in 1978 was succeeded by Mrs Esma Kelso.[16] The period saw the deaths of Alice Creswick, O.B.E., D.G.St.J., (November 1973)[17], Rita May Harris, O.B.E.

(1975), Nancy Francis (1975)[18], and Christine Heinig (1980)[19], all remembered for their many and varied services to pre-school children and particularly to the Union.

An important step was taken by the Union early in 1975 when it moved into recently purchased premises of its own in Church Street, Richmond.[20] This charmingly renovated terrace house adapted well to the Union's office needs; a generous grant from the Victorian Government helped with the cost and the previous, regular, unproductive drain of rent on Union finances ceased. Once ensconced in Richmond, the Union began investigating a new service for its kindergartens, that of Central Payment.[21] By this scheme, local treasurers would be relieved of the burden of constant cheque-writing with numerous complex adjustments for such items as sick leave; at the same time directors and staff would no longer be subject to the inconvenience of late payment when a busy young mother or forgetful business man overlooked the advent of pay day! The scheme took much organization, but finally came into operation early in 1980[22]; all relevant facts are provided by the local treasurers to the Union accounting staff; the information is then computerized and fed into an outside computer system; appropriate cheques are then sent to the treasurers.

This system appears to be working well and has in no way affected the autonomy of local committees. Both they and the Union are still very conscious of the value of the local committee. The personnel of committees continues to change frequently, and the Union therefore continues its efforts to educate members by the literature it makes available and at the quarterly council meetings. As the role of government increased both bureaucratically and financially in the pre-school world, the Union, as a voluntary organization, continued to stress the role of its affiliated committees as a focus and voice in a local community. Helen Paul wrote in 1974:

> We are concerned . . . that it is essential in a democracy to make every effort to avoid bureaucracy. So we have attempted to use our organisational structure to the full to obtain the thinking of our constituents.[23]

Bureaucracy, at local, state, and federal levels, was indeed an ever-increasing presence in the 1970s. The municipalities were now uniformly involved in pre-schools[24], and the Victorian Health Department was responsible for an increasing number of pre-school centres and their supervision: there were over 1000 subsidized pre-school centres in Victoria by the end of the decade. Finally, with the victory of the Labor Party at the federal elections in December 1972, the Commonwealth Government also entered the pre-school field.

Financially, the position of the Union, apparently rescued by the Hamer government in 1973, did not long remain free from anxiety.[25] There was only a small surplus in 1974—naturally enough, when one recalls that the previous year's deficit of $15 000 had to be made up; in 1975 there was a surplus of $1500, but investigation shows that, without a legacy of $10 000, this would have been $8000 deficit; the deficit in the following year was $16 000. In 1978, the deficit would have been $23 000, but again the Union achieved a surplus because of another legacy, this time over $30 000. From then on, the situation worsened with deficits of $22 000 in 1979 and $17 000 in 1980.

Two reasons for this financial plight are obvious. One was inflation. The effect of this was that outside donations which tended to remain nominally the same ('We always give $100, dear') were worth less. Churches and all voluntary organizations suffered in this way. The other obvious reason was increasing salaries; all Union employees were now covered by some award and the salary bill therefore continued to rise.

In addition, two factors peculiar to the Union contributed to the financial problem. At the beginning of 1977 the position of part-time supervisor was made full-time.[26] This meant an additional salary burden for the Union was, and is, subsidized for only three full-time professional salaries; from 1977 the Director and three supervisors were employed. In 1980 an additional part-time supervisor was employed.[27] This meant that one and a half supervisory salaries had to be financed by the Union, in addition to the salaries of a part-time social worker and the office staff. By 1980 the Union had to find from its own resources a sum between $70 000 and $75 000.

Why did the Union enlarge its supervisory staff in this way? The president, when writing to the Assistant Minister of Health late in 1980, said that the Union would allow no more than 25 kindergartens to each supervisor.[28] But, even allowing for the overall co-ordinating role of the Director and therefore allotting fewer kindergartens to her direct supervision, it would appear, *on paper*, as if the Union was professionally overstaffed. In practice, however, the Union was finding that the Victorian community of the 1970s needed increasing 'professional support and advice'. There were an increasing number of broken marriages, an increasing number of single-parent families[29], an increasing number of, frequently unstable, de facto relationships, an increasing number of children trying to fit into the so-called 'blended' family. Helen Paul saw, in 1976, a danger of breeding 'generations of emotionally deprived children', and wondered how many problems of adolescence could be traced back to insecure childhood.[30] The Union continued to stress the need for work with families, for the kindergarten as an extension of a child's home background and as a support for it. In 1980 the president noted that, though society and patterns of behaviour among adults might change,

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> the basic needs of young children and their families do not change. Children still need the security of a loving, nurturing environment and parents still need support and resources to help provide this most basic of human needs for their children.[31]

A supervisor, applying years of experience and professional expertise to guiding and assisting a kindergarten teacher to cope with all the complex emotional and psychological problems of children from a disturbed background, with their relationship with their parents and their adjustment to their peers, cannot work in a rush. The quick visit, the brisk phone call, do not suffice. A gradually developed, well-rooted relationship is essential. If a substantial deficit is the price which the Union pays for this, that is merely evidence that the Union considers the end to be of more consequence than the anxieties and problems which may arise in pursuing it.

The second, major, additional factor leading to financial difficulty was the Union's commendable, if rash, persistence in continuing to be a pioneer. This time it ventured into the field of pre-school education for migrant children, a venture culminating with the setting up in 1977 of the Multi-cultural Resource Centre (MRC). The Union had, as shown in the previous chapter, long been aware of the existence, seen by some as a problem, of migrant children in some Union kindergartens. Many Union kindergartens—Brookville in Prahran, for instance, and Rita May Harris in Collingwood—had been quietly coping with migrant children throughout the 1960s. They had coped well or less well, according to the abilities and initiative of their director and committee members, but the problem had not been seen as a whole. It seems to have been regarded as local and temporary, pertaining to a particular kindergarten at a particular time, rather than as one involving large sections of the Victorian community over several decades and, as such, requiring broad, long-term policies and strategy to meet it. A Union Council meeting in October 1969 seems however to have been the first occasion when the migrant question was publicly aired.[32] Mrs Kay Hirst, Director of the Opportunity Clubs Kindergarten in Burnley, spoke to that meeting on work with Greek children in her kindergarten. She stressed not merely the obvious mechanical problem of communication between a teacher with little or no Greek and parents and children with only minimal English, but also the subtler problems raised by lack of understanding of 'the social history of migrant , the difference between country and city migrants, the tension between generations living together, the drive and ambition of Greek families to own their own homes, the role of the father in Greek families, their customs and superstitions'. At that stage, all the Union Council could suggest was contacting the Royal Children's Hospital for advice and help in obtaining interpreters, but at least the suggestion had been made for some more positive approach than merely expecting migrant children and their families to adapt to and adopt, automatically and completely, Australian ways.

The realization of the magnitude of the task was brought home sharply to the Victorian pre-school world two years later when Dr W.C. Radford, then Director of the ACER and formerly Chairman of the KTC Council, gave the occasional address at the College graduation ceremony. Among the Australian States, he said, Victoria was easily the leader in pre-school education, but even here the availability of pre-school opportunity was uneven. Results of an ACER survey had shown that, whereas 70 per cent of native-born children entering primary school in Victoria had had pre-school experience, only 50 per cent of English-speaking migrant children shared this advantage, while among the children of non-English-speaking migrants, the percentage dropped to only 29 per cent.[33]

Again, in 1972 when the Consultative Council was collecting submissions for its report on pre-school child development, it found that despite many advertisements in foreign-language newspapers *no* replies were received from migrant organizations or from migrant parents of pre-school children.[34]

Clearly a considerable number of children were for whatever reason—ignorance, apathy, hostility, inability—not sharing a facility widely taken advantage of by native-born families. At the Union, the Director and her supervisors, realizing that any attempt to spread understanding of the value of pre-school education among migrant families must be based on as much reliable information as possible, prepared a questionnaire which was printed by the APA and sent out in first term and again in third term, 1974, to all kindergartens and play centres in Victoria. Its coverage was comprehensive—the number of migrant children, their nationality, the area where they lived, their language ability, and the movement of migrant groups within the community.[35]

In the course of 1974, making a start even before the second round of questionnaires had been returned, Miss Moorhead, her supervisors, and several concerned directors formed a Migrant Working Party.[36] Its object was to compile and make available, in one known place, material for use with migrant families and information on the customs, assumptions, and way of life of the many different ethnic groups whose children were attending pre-school centres—including Union kindergartens—in increasing numbers. They noted, for instance—to take one simple example—that, to their way of thinking, many southern European mothers overdressed their children in the winter months and objected to their playing outside in cold weather. This meant that a Greek child might miss possibly weeks at kindergarten in second term. Clearly this custom needed to be understood by directors; and migrant mothers, on the other hand, needed to be helped to understand Australian views on the value of fresh air and outdoor activity. This implied proper communication, which implied material by which to communicate—written (pamphlets, books), pictorial (posters, films, slides) and oral (records, cassettes) in the various migrant languages. Directors were asked to contribute from their own experience any practical information about the customs of different ethnic groups which might be of assistance to other directors.

At the same time there was a, perhaps belated, recognition in the community generally, reflected strongly in the Union, that the interaction of children and families into the ways of other cultures must not be a one-way traffic. Why sing only Anglo-Saxon nursery rhymes? Why remember Anzac Day and ignore a Moslem holy day or an Orthodox festival? Some attempt should be made to ensure that a kindergarten program had relevance, at some point, to the background of all the ethnic groups represented there, that it should be, in fact, multi-cultural. The Union staff saw that the earlier that groups of migrant and native-born families were brought together in a friendly unhurried environment, the more quickly and easily would feelings, perhaps unconscious, of mutual fear and hostility disappear. The Union also realized that often the kindergarten was the first point of contact with the community made by a migrant family; the adjustment of a migrant pre-school child to his group and of his parents, especially his mother, to other parents would substantially smooth the way to integration of the child later at school and make it easier for the family to become part of its local community.

This growing awareness made the sudden, unheralded closure of the Opportunity Clubs Kindergarten in Burnley at the beginning of 1975 particularly distressing.[37] The Union knew that most of the children thus unexpectedly deprived of pre-school experience were from migrant families. Only a year later a new committee opened another affiliated kindergarten in the neighbourhood, in Canterbury Street, later transferred to Duke Street.

For some years the Boroondara Kindergarten was the centre of what became the MRC of the FKU. A small library of children's books and cassettes in several languages was begun; teachers could borrow these for use in their kindergartens. Regular meetings were held where directors could exchange ideas, problems, and advice. But more was needed. At least one trained kindergartener should be employed full-time to direct such a centre, to select and collect material, and to go out and make contact with migrant groups and other organizations working in the field to make them aware of the service being offered. The salary of such a person, possible secretarial assistance, premises, and the foreseeable costs of equipment and materials—including such expensive items as audio-visual equipment, photocopying equipment, projectors, and cassette copiers—were clearly beyond the financial capacity of the Union unaided.

In 1975 application for funds for the project was made via the Victorian Government to the new Interim Committee for the federal Labor government's Children's Commission.[38] No federal funds were forthcoming and a year later the Union's Director wrote that 'the whole project is frustrated, starved and inadequate through lack of funds to employ a leader and to pay for materials'.[39] For a third successive year (1976–77) the Union applied in vain for federal government funding; the Liberal-National Party Coalition which had replaced the Labor government seemed equally deaf to the Union's requests. The annual report stated that 'the only extra service available to pre-school centres in Victoria, whether affiliated or independent, to assist in the work with migrant children is that freely offered by the FKU', but acknowledged sadly that the embryo MRC, still operating at Boroondara, was only 'a piecemeal stop-gap service'.[40] In that year the Union published a booklet in seven languages called *Your Kindergarten*, explaining to mothers with little or no English the value of kindergarten for their children and the procedures of a kindergarten.[41] Unfortunately, a small charge to cover costs had to be made, so often those who might have benefited most from it were the people who never acquired it.[42]

As so often in the Union's history, persistence ultimately triumphed. In 1978 a small federal grant ($4800) was received and a recurrent grant for the salaries of a migrant project officer and her assistant[43]; later an additional grant for the salary of an office junior was added. Priscilla Clarke, the project officer, left the Boroondara Kindergarten and established the Multi-cultural Resource Centre in the big front room upstairs in the Union offices in Church Street. The MRC was embryonic no longer, but could develop effectively its object of providing 'resources, information and channels of information for all people working with pre-school migrant children and their families'.

Not surprisingly, as the subsidy remained unchanged while expenses continued to mount, the Union remained responsible for more than it could reasonably bear of the costs of its new venture. The provision of a field officer, badly needed to research further needs and services and to publicize the work, was beyond its means. Nevertheless the work of the Centre continued to develop as increasing numbers of directors, from non-union as well as Union kindergartens, and community workers dealing with migrant families, realized how their work with migrant children, many of them now Asians, could benefit by its advice and materials. The Union president was warm in her praise of the work of the Centre and of the Union itself[44] which had once again uncovered needs and pioneered a new field of service in pre-school education, showing the way until government was prepared to provide essential financial support. The Health Commission, too, acknowledged the role of the Centre:

> [Kindergarten] teachers and day-care staff are being helped to plan for the different ethnic groups by the MRC . . . administered by the FKU and financed by the Commonwealth Government.[45]

The entry of the federal government into the pre-school field needs comment. Canberra's involvement started with the Whitlam government (1972–75) which declared its 'firm intention that by 1980 all children in Australia will have access to services designed to take care of their educational, emotional, physical, social and recreational needs'.[46]

The Union welcomed the advent of a potential new source of funds in the pre-school arena, but there were difficulties—two in particular. In the first place, the Union saw Labor policy as too bureaucratic, as allowing insufficient scope for voluntary organizations, which the Union regarded as absolutely essential—a view based on their liberal, self-help-except-for-the-really-desperate philosophy, on their belief that people really only value something they have had to work for and in which they share the organization and the responsibility. The Hon. Lionel Bowen, then Minister assisting the Prime Minister, explicitly stated that 'the interim Committee, and ultimately the Commission, will take over responsibility for administering *all existing commitments in the areas of child care and pre-schools*' (author's italics). Here was fundamental disagreement in principle. Does it explain, or partly explain, why *no* Union submission for federal funding (for the MRC, for instance) was successful during the term of the Labor government?

Secondly, and again the difference is basic, the Union was suspicious of the government's explicit intention to 'break down the false dichotomy between child care and pre-schooling' and was alarmed at the statement that 'no rigid distinction should be made between educating children and caring for them'. At once the Union was confronted with its own past; the original philanthropy/educational controversy seemed to take fresh life; for the Union *did* believe that child care and education were distinct—though not that there was a 'rigid distinction' between them. The convener of the education committee made this clear when she wrote in 1977:

> [There is need for] growth in relationship between the fields [two fields, not one] of day-care and pre-school education, . . . both being based on child-development principles, as well as being *ideally* the product of locally based committees and providing an extension of the child's fundamental home life[47] (author's italics).

A year later she again referred to 'the growing relationship between pre-school education and child care of all kinds' but expressed concern at 'the confusion in the public mind between the two.'[48]

The confusion, historically speaking, was understandable, and the Union's position was difficult. Because of the philanthropic nature of one of its twin bases and the philanthropic intentions of many of its staff and committees, not only in the early days but right up to World War II and even beyond, as was apparent in the controversy over the holiday homes, it had always directed its energies primarily to children in need, to families in poor circumstances. And it still did. One need instance only its work in Housing Commission areas since 1939. But at the same time, stemming from its other educational base, the creed remained unchanged: Froebel, the master, was a teacher; the trained kindergartener was a teacher; the business of a kindergarten was education. It was clear from the Minister's statement and from the subsequent activities of the federal government that the ALP believed that the traditional three-hour kindergarten session, even the 'extended programme' of some Union kindergartens was primarily benefiting 'children whose mothers can afford to stay at home' (one might add, were willing to stay at home). Labor's chief concern was to provide adequate child-minding or day-care centres (which the Union's founders had called crèches) so that all children could be adequately cared for when and if their mothers chose, or were economically obliged, to work.

The Union has been accused many times of 'being out of date', of 'wearing blinkers', in failing to appreciate that social realities are changing rapidly, that an increasing number of mothers are working, that an increasing number of children come from single-parent homes where the parent, given the low level of government benefits, is virtually forced to work to maintain any sort of home at all for a child or children. The accusation sounds plausible: to take a child to kindergarten at 9 a.m., then go to work, then leave work in time to collect the child at 12, or 3.30 p.m. in an extended hours program, requires a very special, rare kind of job, certainly not the sort of shop, bank, or factory job which absorbs most young working mothers.

But the Union is not oblivious of the current situation; as long ago as 1974 Helen Paul laid down its still-existing guidelines.[49] Of course, she had agreed, there must be facilities available for children whose parents could not care for them by day; she suggested that ideally such children should be able to attend kindergarten too—either in or as part of a group from their care centre. Day-care, however, must never be confused with kindergarten which 'should be regarded as the basic phase of the nation's educational system'. Six years later, Heather Moorhead rephrased what was basically the same message. Kindergartens were established and maintained to provide 'a good quality pre-school educational programme'. She noted that, with the rapid increase in day-care centres, departmental supervisors were now required to oversee child-minding centres as well as kindergartens; their work load was impossible. The Union, she said, had no intention of lowering its standards and embracing child-minding as well as education.[50]

There was a practical as well as a philosophic reason for the federal government's emphasis on day-care rather than on education. Trained kindergarteners are now in receipt of professional salaries. A child minder is cheaper. It was ironical that the first government which explicitly declared a policy of expending government money on pre-school children—*all* pre-school children—should do so at a time when, after half a century of effort, the pre-school educators had at last achieved a salary which made government reluctant to employ them or to subsidize those who did. Consider this report of the Union director in 1976. Twice, she stated (and it was to be repeated in a third year), the Union had applied for federal subsidy from the Interim Committee of the Children's Commission: (1) for two special programs—the enrichment of parents and the enrichment of migrants (this was to become the MRC); (2) for one auxiliary teacher for kindergartens in 'special need' (the Union itself ultimately funded an auxiliary teacher for one day a week only); and (3) for the reopening of the second unit at the Dame Nellie Melba Kindergarten in Richmond. Because of lack of funding, 80 mainly migrant children in Richmond (in 1975 and 1976) had had no pre-school experience.[51] (Boroondara was full, mainly with children from Housing Commission flats, the majority of migrant origin. There was no Burnley kindergarten in 1975.)

When a Liberal government was returned to Canberra, they found the federal Treasury deeply involved in pre-school funding which, for political reasons, they could not just abandon. They continued therefore to fund approved children's projects from the Office of Child Care, which operates within the Department of Social Security. The funding is not regarded as educational, in the way that grants for universities or for secondary schools are; it is seen as 'philanthropic'—to use the old term, as 'social welfare'—to use a newer, euphemistic one. Thus, when the Union yet again applied for funding for the Dame Nellie Melba Kindergarten, the federal Office of Child Care offered $46 000 for capital costs. They would not, however, subsidize the salary of a trained kindergartener, only 75 per cent of the salary of a child-care worker. No committee could hope to make good the difference between this 75 per cent and the full salary of a pre-school teacher. The Union was prepared to introduce an 'extended hours' program, but stuck to its basic belief that kindergartens are for education and that a trained teacher must be employed.

Instead of accepting the federal offer, therefore, the Union opted for a two-for-one state government grant—$23 000 for building—and the annual state subsidy which covers the whole salary of a kindergarten teacher.[52]

The Victorian Government, itself dependent for the major part of its revenue on the Commonwealth Government, continues to subsidize pre-school education in Victoria via the Health Commission. By 1980 there were 1125 subsidized kindergartens in Victoria[53]; of these, 84 were Union kindergartens. In the same year there were 4431 subsidized day-care centres, well over half of them funded directly by the federal Office of Child Care, 1488 funded by the Victorian Health Commission. Nevertheless the Commission's annual report affirms that in the pre-school field 'the kindergarten . . . continues to be the main service'.[54]

The pioneers had done their work well. Onto the original stem of four separate kindergartens for deprived children, the first pre-school educationalists had grafted pre-school philosophy; the Union, thus formed and grown beyond recognition, became by the middle of the century a pressure group on government and an influence throughout society—a society which, through the Union's efforts, was beginning to accept the value of pre-school education. As a voluntary organization, the Union has handed on to government, one by one, many of the ventures it has pioneered: the training of teachers, medical and dental inspection of pre-school children, the funding of kindergartens and their staffs and, to some extent, of its own staff. It has also seen other groups—churches and municipalities and governments—develop their own pre-school systems: once a lesson is learnt, a good teacher steps aside. Some needs which the Union met in early days no longer exist; the holiday homes, for instance, now meet the new need for emergency care. Some needs exist today which were undreamt of in 1908—notably the big migrant population of the inner suburban areas and the number of broken families and disturbed children—and such needs the Union expressly endeavours to meet.

The involvement of municipal, state, and federal governments in the pre-school field has led the Union to stress more than ever the always vital role of local committees, to emphasize that it is individuals in their own community setting who best know their own needs and who, given a framework in which to operate and expert help and guidance, can best sort out and assume responsibility for their own requirements. There still remain, however, some groups of people—the ignorant, the unintelligent, the disadvantaged, the transients, the newcomers—who require more than this, for whom the framework and guidance are insufficient. Such groups lack both understanding of the value of pre-school education and the initiative to establish or maintain a kindergarten, making use of available government assistance. For them, the old-fashioned 'local' committee—not local at all, but composed of outsiders able and willing to assist—still has an essential function if children who most need pre-school education are not to be deprived of its advantages. This is a function not met by the Health Commission; indeed, it is questionable if it could be met by any impersonal, centralized bureaucracy, let alone a division whose staff is overburdened with an impossible work load. Union members and their associates, however, are still prepared to act voluntarily to initiate, guide, sustain, and give continuity to kindergarten committees in 'areas of need'. In the provision of this service, the Union still retains traces of its part-philanthropic origins, though the pendulum has long since settled firmly at the educational end of the dial.

The Union has much in common with other voluntary organizations, though, unlike some others, it has almost from the beginning received some financial support for its work from government. Now, like other major voluntary organizations, it receives a great deal of help, without which it could not continue. The advent of the professional—the highly paid professional at that, the higher level of expectation of the quality of facilities, and the tremendous bite of seemingly endless inflation have ensured the necessity, in fact the inevitability, of government funding. This has been compounded by the relative decrease in voluntary contributions as a percentage of income, as both individuals and companies with taxes eating more deeply feel that they can or will give no more.

The obvious difficulty has therefore arisen: how much control is expected by the provider of the funds? If more freedom of choice and action—for example, in the employment of a teacher rather than a child-care worker—is asked by the recipient, then funds may not be forthcoming. If authority—either a politician with an eye on his electorate or a public servant seeking a plausible lever to extract funds from Treasury—finds that a voluntary agency is not exerting sufficient pressure, or pressure in the appropriate quarter, or pressure for a cause which can be presented in a favourable light to the electorate and to Treasury, then the probability is that the organization will be given a friendly handshake and sent empty away. Funds are available; money is found for increases in the salaries and gratuities of politicians and public servants; but funds have to be tapped and released. No goose laid a golden egg in Victoria at the end of 1972, yet the Hamer government funded voluntary pre-school organizations within a few months of taking office; and Treasury, unresponsive for 25 years, managed to increase pre-school training bursaries.

One of the Union's problems is that still, despite tremendous advances, the value of pre-school education is not thoroughly appreciated; intangibles cannot be measured. The 1970s saw a great upsurge in social concern for the underprivileged, but nearly always the concern was expressed in physical form—food, shelter, clothing, jobs. Funds were forthcoming for these purposes, though arguably insufficient funds. Funds are available, too, for some types of education. If plumbers are too few, somehow increased funds for apprenticeships materialize; if scientists are losing ground in the research field, research grants are increased. But funds for education for little children—for boys and girls under five years old? Many people, among them many in authority, find this difficult to accept even in 1980.

This is probably, one suspects, because they still tend to equate 'education' with the three Rs, with skills which can be seen and assessed. They fail to appreciate the earlier stages of child development like co-ordination and concentration, initiative and co-operation, like the ability to listen and respond to words and music, like the development of imagination, self-awareness and self-respect. The free availability of this education has been and remains the aim of the Free Kindergarten Union. It will only be realized if the Union can continue its efforts of the last three-quarters of a century and, by publicity, pressure, persistence, and example, convince the holders of the purse-strings, those in authority and those who elect them, of the value of pre-school education.

Notes and References

The location of primary sources and full details for secondary sources are given in the Bibliography.

The references in the Notes for each chapter are generally abbreviated. Unless otherwise stated, the following abbreviations apply to the respective sources:

Annual Report	FKU *Annual Report*
Council minutes	FKU Council minutes
Delegates minutes	FKU Delegates minutes
Education committee minutes	FKU Education committee minutes
Education Department	Victorian Education Department
Executive minutes	FKU Executive minutes
SCF	Special case file (Education Department)

Introduction

1 R.W. Selleck, *The New Education, 1870–1914*, 1968. An admirable general coverage of the New Education movement. He deals with Froebel in ch. 6.

2 Charles Dickens (Ed.), *Household Words*, No. 278, 21 July 1855, Vol. XI, pp. 577–82.

3 Report of directors association meeting, 25 Oct. 1912. In MS minutes of directors association, 24 June 1910–18 Aug. 1916.

4 Marjorie R. Theobald, *Ruyton Remembers 1878–1978*, 1978, pp. 58–62.

5 L.J. Blake (Ed.), *Vision and Realisation: A Centenary History of State Education in Victoria*, 1973, Vol. I, pp. 871–3.

6 Quoted in M.L. Walker, The development of the kindergarten movement in Australia, 1964, p.344.
7 Delegates minute book 9 Oct. 1908. From 13 Nov. 1908, these became Council minutes.
8 Sub-committee minute book 3 Nov. 1909. From 2 May 1910, these became Executive minutes.
9 Marion Champlin held a diploma from the Training College, School for Young Women, in Chicago, and had also done postgraduate work with the Free Kindergarten Training Institute in Chicago. Rosemary Boreham, The phenomenon of change in a tertiary institution, 1979, pp.74–5.
10 Education Department SCF 1110, 7 June 1911.
11 W.A. Somerset, Teaching the game of life, 1909b, p.351.
12 Account of opening of Collingwood Mission Free Kindergarten, 17 Aug. 1907.
13 First annual report of Collingwood Mission Free Kindergarten, 15 Aug. 1908. It is pleasing to know that the speaker was familiar with the works of Charles Dickens, himself an advocate of Froebelian philosophy and practice. However, it is perhaps regrettable that the quotation 'So fresh from the hand of God' is taken from ch. LXXI of *The Old Curiosity Shop* where Dickens describes the appearance of Little Nell on her death bed.
14 *Report of Bouverie Street, Carlton Kindergarten 1903*, p.8.
15 id., 1907, pp.4–5.
16 Smyth to Tate, 16 Nov. 1914, SCF 1110.
17 M.V. Hansen seconding adoption of Annual Report at FKU annual meeting 1927; Council minutes 12 Aug. 1927.
18 Hansen to Tate, 4 July 1912, SCF 1110.
19 For example, Council minutes 3 June 1909; Executive minutes 18 July, 2 Oct. 1913.
20 J.A. Symonds, 1840–93.
21 W.A. Somerset, Learning the game of life, 1909a, p.263.

Chapter 1

1 The first four paragraphs of this chapter are based entirely on original FKU records; I have not included specific references, as the context and precise dates given make this unnecessary: Council minutes (Delegates in Oct. 1908) 9 Oct. 1908–3 Aug. 1911; Executive minutes ('Sub-committee' till 22 Mar. 1910) 22 Mar. 1910–25 Jan. 1912; Education committee minutes 23 May 1911–June 1913.
2 This date is given in the Charity Organisation Society's booklet *A Guide to Charity*, 1912, p.88. The earliest surviving annual report of the Carlton Free Kindergarten is 1903. (Available at FKU)
3 COS, op. cit., p.87.
4 Original manuscript report of opening, 17 Aug. 1908. (Available at FKU)
5 COS, op.cit., pp.86, 88. *Annual Report*, 1910, pp.2, 8; 1911, p.19; 1912, p.18; 1934, p.18. Somerset, 1909b, op.cit., p.351.
6 Executive minutes, 7 Oct. 1909; *Annual Report*, 1910, p.2.
7 *Annual Report*, 1910, p.2.
8 *ibid.*

9 *ibid.*
10 id., 1916, p.18.
11 Executive minutes, 12 May 1910; id., 1911, pp.6, 18; 1934, p.19.
12 *Annual Report*, 1911, p.6.
13 id., 1911, p.19. According to COS, op.cit., p.86, the Collingwood crèche had been operating since 1888.
14 *Annual Report*, 1911, p.19; COS, op.cit., p.87, gives the date of opening of the Richmond crèche as 1891.
15 *Annual Report*, 1910, p.6.
16 Somerset, 1909b, op.cit., p.351.
17 For example, *Annual Report*, 1913, p.22; 1915, p.11.
18 Isabel Henderson, report 7 June 1911, SCF 1110.
19 Executive minutes, 7 Oct. 1909.
20 id., 9 June 1910.
21 id., 8 Sept. 1910.
22 Education committee minutes, 25 Aug. 1911. See also this committee's resolutions on two loose, undated sheets in this, its first minute book.
23 Somerset, 1909b, op.cit., p.351.
24 *Annual Report*, 1913, p.6.
25 Hansen to Tate, 19 Aug. 1912, SCF 1110.
26 *Annual Report*, 1919, p.11.
27 Education committee minutes, 19 Mar. 1918.
28 *Annual Report*, 1913, p.17.
29 id., 1916, p.17.
30 id., 1917, p.7.
31 id., 1914, p.16.
32 id., 1913, p.17.
33 *The Argus*, 30 Mar. 1911—report of annual meeting.
34 *Annual Report*, 1912, p.22.
35 Isabel Henderson, report 7 June 1911, SCF 1110.
36 Fawcett to directors association, 25 Oct. 1912. (Minutes handwritten in exercise books at FKU.)
37 *Annual Report*, 1915, p.12.
38 id., 1913, p.7.
39 Executive minutes, 12 May 1910.
40 *The Argus*, 30 Mar. 1911.
41 *Annual Report*, 1913, p.12.
42 ibid., p.8.
43 Council minutes 11 Oct. 1911.
44 This comment was made by Maybanke (Mrs Francis) Anderson, a prominent early advocate for kindergartens in New South Wales. I have not read her article, The story of the Kindergarten Union in NSW in *The Story of Kindergartens in NSW* (1911); but it is quoted by M. Walker, 1964, op.cit., p.20.
45 Council minutes, 14 May 1909.
46 id., 3 June 1909.
47 id., 26 June 1909.
48 id., 20 Aug. 1909.
49 Somerset, 1909b, op.cit., p.352.

50 *Annual Report*, 1910, p.6.
51 Council minutes, 7 Dec. 1909.
52 id., 15 February 1910; Smyth to Tate 20 July, 12 Nov. 1910, SCF 1110. At this time, departmental fees for sub-primary trainees were £6/6/- per annum.
53 *Annual Report*, 1911, p.5.
54 Education Department, 16 June 1910, SCF 1110.
55 id., 20 July 1910.
56 Hansen to Victorian Treasurer, 4 July 1912, SCF 1110.
57 Council minutes, 3 Aug. 1911, which include copy of secretary's letter to this effect to Mrs Champlin; Executive minutes 2 Aug. 1911.
58 Education committee minutes, 31 Aug. 1911.
59 Theobald, 1978, op.cit., p.62.
60 Council minutes, 11, 30 October 1911.
61 id., 6 Dec. 1911.
62 id., 12 Dec 1911.
63 Printed copy of 1912 Constitution at FKU.

Chapter 2

1 Council minutes, 25 Apr. 1912.
2 id., 30 May 1912.
3 M.V. Hansen, report 2 July 1912, SCF 1110.
4 *The Herald*, 8 Oct., 1912.
5 id., 10 Oct. 1912.
6 *Annual Report*, 1913, pp.22, 36.
7 id., 1914, pp.25, 40.
8 id., 1913, pp.17, 27, 32.
9 id., 1914, p.10.
10 id., 1913, p.5.
11 id., 1913, p.6.
12 Education committee minutes, 8 May 1912. See also Executive minutes, 27 Nov., 1912.
13 Executive minutes, 2 Sept. 1912; Education committee minutes, 23 Oct. 1912; Council minutes, 31 Oct. 1912.
14 Council minutes, 20 Nov. 1912 (appended).
15 Folded, typed document, dated July 1913, in Council minutes, 27 June 1912–25 Mar. 1919. Union objections in vigorous long hand in the margins; e.g. 'Never!' See also Executive minutes, 18 July 1913.
16 Council minutes, 29 Aug. 1913—a handwritten report of the 1913 annual meeting.
17 *Annual Report*, 1914, p.6.
18 Executive minutes, 2 Oct. 1913—especially comments of Mary Lush, Maud Wilson, and the Rev. Gault.
19 ibid.—especially the exchange between John Smyth and Isabel Henderson.
20 Smyth to Tate, 16 Nov. 1914, SCF 1110.
21 Folded, typed document in Council minutes, 27 June 1912–25 Mar. 1919. Undated, but from internal evidence almost certainly after Smyth's letter to Tate (Note 20) and before Miss McMeekin's letter of 12 Dec. 1914 (Note 24).

22 Letter of resignation received 26 Mar. 1915. Executive minutes are missing for this period, but Smyth had told Tate of his intention to resign on 16 Nov. 1914 and by 6 Dec. 1914 had clearly done so (SCF 1110). Miss Pye also resigned from the education committee over the issue. Council minutes 27 Aug. 1915.

23 *Annual Report*, 1915, p.16.

24 Irene V. McMeekin to Mrs T.A. a'Beckett, 12 Dec. 1914—handwritten letter in Council minutes, 27 June 1912–25 Mar. 1919.

25 *Annual Report*, 1915, p.9, and 1916, p.7–8.

26 Tate to FKU, 18 Jan. 1915, SCF 1110.

27 *Annual Report*, 1916, p.8. It is instructive to recall that the South Australian Kindergarten Union, which had established its own Adelaide Kindergarten Training College in 1907, was shortly afterwards under considerable pressure to become an integral part of the state training college. Successful resistance to this pressure was led by Lillian da Lissa, the Union's director as well as its college principal (*Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol. 8, pp.273–4). Other kindergarten training colleges had been established in NSW (1896), Queensland (1907), and WA (1913). All remained independent for the next half century. It seems probable that, in all Australian States, kindergarteners acted from similar motives in opposing absorption into a general training institution.

28 Council minutes, 27 Aug. 1915.

29 id., 11 Dec. 1916—report of education committee.

30 id., 28 Aug. 1917. In fact, KTC diplomates were *not* employed in the sub-primary sections of state schools, mainly because principals preferred their staffs to be completely interchangeable from preparatory to sixth grades; neither would the state department grant reciprocity to KTC graduates to teach overseas. Perhaps this was the price paid by the Union for insubordination.

31 Smyth to Tate, 11 Aug. 1916, SCF 1110.

32 Education Department correspondence, 21 Sept. 1916, 2 and 16 Nov. 1916, SCF 1110.

33 Lady Spencer to Smyth, 16 Mar. 191[illegible], SCF 1110.

34 Smyth to Lady Spencer, 13 Feb. 1917, and Lady Spencer's reply, 16 Mar. 1917, SCF 1110.

35 Smyth to Lady Spencer, 21 Mar. 1917, SCF 1110.

36 Tate to Mrs a'Beckett, 8 May 1917, SCF 1110.

37 Handwritten and signed report appended to Council minutes, 2 Apr. 1912.

38 Education committee minutes, 6 May 1912.

39 id., 10 May 1912.

40 id., 28 May 1912.

41 id., 17 Sept. 1913.

42 id., 9 July 1913.

43 id., 18 Sept. 1913.

44 Council minutes, 12 Dec. 1911.

45 id., 4 Dec. 1913.

46 id., 24 June 1914.

47 id., 29 Apr. 1914—appended.

48 id., 4 Aug. 1914.

49 Education committee minutes, 19 Feb. 1913.

50 For example, *Annual Report*, 1915, p.25 (Carlton), p.31 (Collingwood Mission);

1916, p.17 (Carlton), p.31 (Collingwood Crèche and Collingwood Mission). Council minutes, 28 Oct. 1914, 29 June and 17 Oct. 1916. The methods and materials advocated by Maria Montessori never appear to have been widely adopted in Union kindergartens.

51 *Annual Report*, 1915, pp.13–14.
52 *Annual Report*, 1916, p.7.
53 Council minutes, 22 Aug. 1916.

Chapter 3

1 *Annual Report*, 1918, p.3.
2 ibid., p.4.
3 Supervisor's report to executive, 16 April 1918 in Executive minutes, 3 Oct. 1917–17 Oct. 1922.
4 Dr Helen Sexton to executive 17 June 1919; Executive minutes 19 Dec. 1919.
5 Minutes of committee of the Lady Northcote Free Kindergarten, Montague, 2 June 1914. The Sunday School was, presumably, attached to St Barnabas Church of England which had made the land for the kindergarten available to the committee at 'a nominal rental' (*Annual Report*, 1912, p.24).
6 *Annual Report*, 1915, p.28.
7 Council minutes, 29 June 1916.
8 *Annual Report*, 1914, p.21.
9 ibid., p.34.
10 Council minutes, 20 Feb. 1917.
11 *Annual Report*, 1917, p.9—supervisor's report.
12 For example, *Annual Report*, 1916, p.9; 1919, p.6.
13 id., 1915, p.15.
14 id., 1918, p.5.
15 Executive minutes, 19 Nov. 1918; *Annual Report*, 1919, p.6.
16 Council minutes, 20 Apr. 1916.
17 *Annual Report*, 1919, p.7.
18 Union to Smyth, 2 Nov. 1916; Smyth to Tate, 3 Nov. 1916; Memo from Tate, 16 Nov. 1916, SCF 1110.
19 Executive minutes, 2 Sept. 1912.
20 id., 9 July 1913.
21 id., 18 Sept. 1913.
22 Financial statements in *Annual Report*, 1915, 1916, 1917, 1918.
23 *Annual Report*, 1914, p.13.
24 These figures also from financial statements in appropriate Annual Reports.
25 Executive minutes, 18 June 1918.
26 id., 13 Oct. 1910.
27 id., 8 Dec. 1910.
28 id., 28 Feb. and 28 Mar. 1912; Education Department, 11 Apr. 1912, SCF 1110.
29 Executive minutes, 27 Nov. 1912.
30 id., 30 Apr., 23 June 1913.
31 id., 12 Feb. 1918.
32 id., 21 May 1918.

33 id., 23 Apr. 1909.

34 id., 21 Oct., 13 Nov. 1908 and 25 Feb., 23 Apr. 1909. These were only two of the many organizations represented on the Union council; others included the National Council of Women, the Ministering Children's League and the University Faculty of Arts and Education. Over the years the Union sent its representatives to, and received representatives from, many bodies whose interests intersected with its own.

35 *Annual Report*, 1912, p.8.

36 All these names may be found in some or all of the lists of council and/or executive members in the first bound volume of *Annual Reports* 1909–20.

37 For example, Barrett—*Annual Report*, 1911, p.12 and 1916, p.21; Greig—*Annual Report*, 1911, p.12; Henderson—*Annual Report*, 1913, p.27; Vale—*Annual Report*, 1914, p.15; and district nurses—*Annual Report*, 1914, pp.24, 35, 37; 1915, p.21; 1916, p.21.

38 Executive minutes, 19 Mar., 18 June 1918.

39 id., 15 Mar. 1919.

40 id., 17 June 1919.

41 id., 15 July, 21 Oct. 1919.

Vera Scantlebury-Brown née Scantlebury (1889–1946) was educated at Toorak College and the University of Melbourne where she graduated in medicine in 1913, she was a resident at the Children's Hospital, an honorary at the Women's and Queen Victoria Hospitals, honorary MO to both the Victorian Baby Health Centres Association and the FKU (1920–34), Director of the new Maternal and Infant Welfare Division of the Victorian Department of Health (1925–45) to which, in 1944, she succeeded in grafting a pre-school section.

42 id., 21 Sept. 1920.

43 *Annual Report*, 1920, pp.14–15.

44 id., 1912, p.18.

45 id., 1914, pp.9 and 25.

46 id., 1915, pp.5 and 13.

47 id., 1917, p.8.

48 Executive minutes, 13 July 1911; Education committee minutes, 17 Sept. 1912.

49 Executive minutes, 21 May 1918.

50 *Annual Report*, 1915, p.5.

51 id., 1915, pp.21–2.

52 id., 1916, p.22.

53 Executive minutes, 20 and 27 Nov., 4 Dec. 1917; 12 Feb., 19 Mar., 17 Sept., 15 Oct., 19 Nov. 1918; 17 June, 21 Oct. 1919. Supervisor's report, 16 Apr. 1918.

54 Executive minutes, 15 Apr., 17 June, 21 Oct. 1919.

55 id., 28 Feb. 1912.

56 Education department, 13 Apr. 1914, SCF 1110.

57 Letter from Mother Patrick to Miss Henderson, 30 Jan. 1912, forwarded to Tate from the Union, SCF 1110.

58 *Annual Report*, 1915, p.40.

59 id., 1918, p.3.

60 Executive minutes, 19 Mar. 1918.

61 Supervisor's report, 16 Apr. 1918.

62 SCF 1110, 25 Jan. 1916

63 The formal date of the founding of the Association of Crèches seems to have been

1912; certainly its first annual report is dated 1913. However, the COS booklet *A Guide to Charity* (January 1912), listing six crèches, says 'they were recently federated and brought, to an extent, under the control of a central organization — The Association of Creches', while Union records from as early as November 1908 clearly regard the crèches as part of an organization, not merely as isolated units. Council minutes of 13 November 1908, 18 March and 31 April 1909, refer to the Federation of Crèches. Furthermore, the formal letter, dated 17 June 1910, from the Education Department to the Union setting out the terms of the original government grant reads in part: '2. As far as possible, free kindergartens to be located at crèches which are under the control of the Victorian Association of Crèches'. Clearly some possibly less formal organization of crèches existed before that which produced the first report in 1913, but the relationship of the two bodies is not clear.

64 M. Hansen—report 19 Aug. 1912, SCF 1110.

65 Council minutes, 11, 17 Dec. 1912; 20 Feb. 1917.

66 *Annual Report*, 1915, p.39.

67 Council minutes, 20 Feb. 1917.

68 *Annual Report*, 1914, pp.32–3.

69 Education committee minutes, 17 June, 19 Dec. 1919.

Chapter 4

1 *Annual Report*, 1918, p.4, 1919, p.5, 1920, p.7, 1921, p.9.

2 id., 1920, p.17.

3 Executive minutes, 19 Mar. 1920.

4 *Annual Report*, 1919, p.5.

5 Council minutes, 27 Apr. 1920.

6 *Annual Report*, 1922, p.5. In 1924 the salary scale *recommended* jointly by the head mistresses and assistant mistresses, for trained primary teachers in independent schools, was £150 per annum for the first two years, rising annually to £200. Probably the smaller, poorer girls schools did not observe the recommendation.

7 id., 1920, p.12. The secretary was Nancy Butcher, later Mrs Francis, an active member of the FKU executive and honorary secretary 1924-47. (See Ch. 6.)

8 Executive minutes, 9 Feb. 1920. Mrs Florence Wrigley, wife of L.J. Wrigley, first principal of University High School and later Professor of Education in the University of Melbourne, had replaced Miss Henderson early in 1919 when Miss Henderson departed with Clyde for the bush at Woodend.

9 Council minutes, 31 Oct. 1912.

10 *Annual Report*, 1920, p.12.

11 *Annual Report*, 1921, p.10.

12 Council minutes, 27 Apr. 1920.

13 Executive minutes, 23 Nov., 22 Dec. 1920, 15 Feb. 1921.

14 id., 16 June 1920.

15 id., 21 Sept. 1920.

16 id., 20 Sept., 3 Oct. 1921.

17 id., 24 Oct. 1921.

18 These figures are given annually in education committee reports to executive, usually in February or March to the first executive meeting after the start of term.

19 Executive minutes, 15 Feb. 1922.

20 *Annual Report*, 1922, p.7.

21 id., 1924, p.30.

22 Executive minutes, 3 Nov. 1921.

23 *Annual Report*, 1923, p.15, 1924, p.15.

24 Education committee minutes, 19 Mar. 1919, 21 Sept. 1920. The background of college students has been thoroughly and most capably investigated by Rosemary Boreham in The phenomenon of change in a tertiary institution, 1979.

25 Patricia Walford, An investigation made into the contribution of Dr Mary V. Gutteridge to the kindergarten movement in Victoria, 1922–1936, 1979. Mrs Walford is Dr Gutteridge's niece.

26 Education committee minutes, 15 Feb. 1921.

27 Executive minutes, 9 Oct. 1921.

28 id., 15 Feb. 1922.

29 id., 7 Mar. 1922.

30 Education committee report to executive, 13 Dec. 1921.

31 Executive minutes, 7 Mar. 1922.

32 Education committee 10 Apr. 1922—supervisor's report.

33 Executive minutes, 20 July 1920.

34 id., 19 Oct. 1920.

35 *Annual Report*, 1922, p.8.

36 For this whole episode, see Executive minutes, 15 Feb., 7 Mar., 4 Apr., 16 May, 15 August 1922; Education committee reports to executive 13 Dec. 1921, 14 Feb. 1922; Council minutes, 30 Aug. 1922 (the extraordinary meeting).

37 Council minutes, 12 Dec. 1922.

38 For this distasteful aftermath, see Executive minutes 17 Oct. 1922 and Council minutes 4 Nov., 12 Dec. 1922, 27 Feb. 1923. Also Letter Books of the Archdiocese of Melbourne Vol. 31, pp.457, 482; Vol. 32 pp.45, 82, 212. These are letters from Archbishop Lees to Miss Mary Emmerton, 8 Nov. 1922, Miss Gilman-Jones, 9 Nov., 25 Nov. 1922, Archdeacon Hindley, 18 Nov. 1922, Mrs a'Beckett, 15 Dec. 1922 (State Library of Victoria, La Trobe Library). Also Council minutes of the MCEGGS, 21 Nov. 1922.

39 References to Mooroolbeek paying kindergarten: Executive minutes, 24 Oct. 1921, 15 Feb., 10 Apr., 20 June 1922, 20 Mar., 15 May, 21 Oct. 1923, 21 Oct. 1924, 21 Apr., 18 Aug., 27 Oct. 1925; *Annual Report*, 1922, pp.7, 12; 1923, pp.35–6.

40 Executive minutes, 10 June 1926—housekeeper's report.

41 Executive minutes, 15 Oct. 1926.

42 Executive minutes, 11 Nov. 1926.

43 *Annual Report*, 1922 et seq. Every year the principal refers to some corporate, useful, often fund-raising activity.

44 *Annual Report*, 1922, p.12.

45 *Annual Report*, 1929, p.41. By 1934 this minimum of 16 had dropped to 11 (Executive minutes 16 Oct. 1934). The only explanation I can suggest for this is more economical management—or a misprint in one source or the other!

46 Executive minutes, 20 Oct. 1931, 20 June 1933.

47 id., 16 Oct., 11 Dec. 1934.

48 *Annual Report*, 1925, p.33.

49 id., 1926, p. 32.

50 id., 1924, p.29.
51 id., 1920, p.17, gives entrance qualifications with the outline of the training course and the fees. This is repeated in subsequent annual reports.
52 Executive minutes, 17 Feb. 1925—Education committee's report and supervisor's report.
53 *Annual Report*, 1924, p.30.
54 Financial statements in *Annual Report*, 1925, 1926, 1927.
55 *Annual Report*, 1924, p.29.
56 id., 1928, p.38.
57 Executive minutes, 21 Feb. 1933—report of education committee.
58 Mary Lush, *Progressive Kindergarten Methods*, 1926; *Annual Report*, 1926, p.31.
59 Executive minutes, 16 Oct. 1926; *Annual Report*, 1927, pp.6, 34; 1928, p.34.
60 Council minutes, 23 Oct. 1923—report of executive.
61 Executive minutes, 21 Feb. 1928—Miss Harris's report. The eleven students referred, presumably, to first-year students. The 1928 *Annual Report* (p.35) gives 13 first-year students; a couple may have been late entries.
62 Executive minutes, 19 Aug. 1930.
63 Executive minutes, 17 Nov. 1925—report of education committee.
64 *Annual Report*, 1927, p.13.
65 Executive minutes, 15 Feb. 1927.
66 *Annual Report*, 1929, p.14.
67 Executive minutes, 21 Feb. 1928.
68 *Annual Report*, 1929, pp.15, 41.
69 Executive minutes, 20 Aug. 1929.
70 Financial statements in *Annual Report*, 1928, 1929.
71 Executive minutes, 14 May, 18 June, 20 Aug. 1935; 18 Feb., 12 May, 16 June, 21 July, 20 Oct. 1936.
72 Executive minutes, 24 Sept. 1929; *Annual Report*, 1930, p.40—principal's report.
73 Executive minutes, 18 Mar., 23 Sept. 1930; Council minutes, 25 June 1930, 24 Feb. 1931; *Annual Report*, 1934, p.48.
74 *Annual Report*, 1931, pp.5, 44; 1932, pp.3–4, 29.
75 Executive minutes, 18 Mar. 1930; *Annual Report*, 1930, p.40.
76 *Annual Report*, 1931, pp.46, 47.
77 M.V. Gutteridge, *The Story of an Australian Nursery School*, 1932.

Chapter 5

1 Numbers are confusing; even the official count in the annual reports is not always consistent. Confusion seems to arise because sometimes nursery schools are counted separately, and sometimes included as part of the 'big' kindergarten. The total of 30 is arrived at by subtracting kindergartens which closed as well as adding new kindergartens; this is why it is below the total of 35 given by Mrs a'Beckett in her 1939 survey—a figure which she reaches without including either nursery schools or holiday homes. I have included the holiday homes but not the nursery schools. Mrs a'Beckett's survey was given in an address to the Union's annual meeting on 23 August 1939. It is printed and bound as *A Historical Sketch* by Ada M. a'Beckett.
2 Figures on which these percentages are based are in *Annual Report*, 1937, p. 23.

3 Education committee 10 Apr. 1932.
4 *Annual Report*, 1923, pp.10–11.
5 Executive minutes, 16 Aug., 20 Sept., 18 Oct. 1927.
6 id., 12 Oct. 1924.
7 id., 16 Feb. 1926.
8 id., 26 Feb. 1929. See also, later in this chapter, the Union's reaction to Dr Dale's proposed new North Melbourne kindergarten.
9 *Annual Report*, 1927, p.5.
10 Executive minutes, 20 Sept. 1927; *Annual Report*, 1928, p.6.
11 *Annual Report*, 1934, p.5.
12 Executive minutes, 20 Aug., 17 Sept., 15 Oct. 1935; *Annual Report*, 1936, pp.6, 20.
13 *Annual Report*, 1920, pp. 3, 11; 1921, p.4.
14 Executive minutes, 20 June 1922.
15 id., 11 Mar. 1922; *Annual Report*, 1922, p.4.
16 Executive minutes, 21 June 1921; *Annual Report*, 1921, p.4; 1922, p.4.
17 Executive minutes, 21 Sept., 14 Dec., 22 Dec. 1920, 15 Feb. 1921.
18 *Annual Report*, 1925, p.4; 1926, p.5.
19. id., 1926, p.5.
20 Executive minutes, 17 Apr. 1928; *Annual Report*, 1927, p.4; 1928, p.4; a'Beckett, op.cit., p.11.
21 *Annual Report*, 1924, pp.4–5.
22 Executive minutes, 21 May, 16 June, 21 July, 22 Sept. 1931; *Annual Report*, 1932, p.3.
23 Executive minutes, 16 Oct., 11 Dec. 1934, 16 Apr. 1935; *Annual Report*, 1935, p.6.
24 Executive minutes, 21 Aug., 11 Dec. 1934, 19 Feb. 1935; *Annual Report*, 1935, p.6.
25 Executive minutes, 18 July, 15 Aug. 1939.
26 *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol. 8, 1981, pp.191–2.
27 *Annual Report*, 1929, p.11; 1930, p.11, and subsequent Annual Reports.
28 Executive minutes, 12 June 1930—entered as Special Meeting.
29 id., 25 Sept. 1928.
30 id., 18 Nov. 1930.
31 id., 18 Apr., 8 Nov. 1939, 7 May 1940.
32 id., 21 Nov. 1939; *Annual Report*, 1940, pp.5–6.
33 Figures in appropriate Annual Reports. This average attendance was, of course, pulled down by the Children's Hospital figures. The Guidance Nursery there had an average attendance of ony 6 and Ward 13 of 8. Also the holiday home children were already counted as kindergarten numbers, though the homes added two to the number of kindergartens.
34 *Annual Report*, 1921, p.12.
35 Education committee, 20 Mar. 1923.
36 Executive minutes, 17 Feb. 1925—supervisor's report.
37 Executive minutes, 21 July 1925.
38 id., 21 Aug. 1934.
39 id., 15 Oct. 1935.
40 id., 21 June 1932.

41 *Annual Report*, 1921, p.4; 1922, p.4; 1923, p.6; 1924, p.4.
42 id., 1923, p.5.
43 ibid., p.5.
44 *Annual Report*, 1925, pp.5–6.
45 Executive minutes, 21 Apr. 1931, 16 Aug. 1932; *Annual Report*, 1922, p.4.
46 *Annual Report*, 1930, pp.6, 8. This addition at Keele Street, the new building at Lillian Cannam, and that at Ballarat were to a large extent financed by a state government grant of £2000. This money, part of the government's Unemployment Relief Scheme, came via the Public Works Department and was conditional on labour for building being obtained from the local Labour Exchange. Executive minutes, 19 Aug. 1930.
47 Executive minutes, 21 Apr. 1931.
48 *Annual Report*, 1932, p.3.
49 Executive minutes, 18 Aug. 1936; *Annual Report*, 1936, p.6.
50 *Annual Report*, 1938, pp.7–8.
51 Executive minutes, 7 Mar., 21 Apr., 16 June, 21 July 1931.
52 id., 10 May 1932.
53 id., 19 July 1932.
54 id., 13 Dec. 1932.
55 id., 8 Apr., 21 June 1938, 6 Feb. 1939, 16 Apr., 7 May 1940.
56 Education committee, 10 Nov. 1939.
57 Executive minutes, 30 Apr. 1935.
58 AAPSCD, First Biennial Conference, 1939, p.178. The Australian Association for Pre-School Child Development was formed following the international education conference held in Australia in 1937, which inspired pre-school workers to call a meeting of the representatives of all state kindergarten unions at the KTC in Melbourne in March 1938. This meeting established the AAPSCD which held its first biennial conference in Melbourne in January 1939. The organization changed its name in 1954 to the simpler Australian Pre-School Association; in earlier days, for obvious reasons, it was irreverently known as Aspidistra!
59 Council minutes, 23 Oct. 1923; Executive minutes, 16 July 1929, 12 Feb., 21 Sept., 20 Oct. 1931; *Annual Report*, 1924, p.10, 1930, pp.16, 20, 1935, p.22, 1938, p.24.
60 Executive minutes, 16 July 1929.
61 Financial statements in relevant Annual Reports for grants from trusts and receipts from charitable appeals.
62 Council minutes, 25 Oct. 1927.
63 Executive report to council, 23 Oct. 1928.
64 Executive minutes, 13 Aug., 25 Sept. 1928.
65 *Annual Report*, 1931, p.16.
66 Executive minutes, 17 June 1930.
67 id., 21 June 1932.
68 *Annual Report*, 1933, p.7.
69 Executive minutes, 20 Sept. 1932.
70 id., 20 Nov. 1934.
71 Council minutes, 23 Nov. 1937.
72 *Annual Report*, 1938, p.24.
73 ibid., p.30—financial statement (receipts).

74 Minutes of joint meeting of executive and finance committees, 16 Dec. 1938.
75 AAPSCD, op.cit., p.177. It is not clear how Mrs Creswick arrived at the figure, 32 kindergartens. Perhaps she counted nursery schools separately, and the three Children's Hospital kindergartens as one. Yooralla had not yet disaffiliated, but Lady Huntingfield was not yet open.
76 ibid., pp.54–5.
77 *Annual Report*, 1930, p.18.
78 Wendy Lowenstein, *Weevils in the Flour*, 1978.
79 Executive minutes, 11 Mar. 1922—supervisor's report.
80 Executive minutes, 21 Aug. 1923.
81 Supervisor's report for Oct. and Nov. 1923 in Executive minute book 1922–25.
82 *Annual Report*, 1925, p.9.
83 Standard of health in kindergartens as adopted by the Council at its Meeting on 29 April 1924, p.3—loose typed sheets in Council minute book, 1919–29.
84 Executive minutes, 17 June, 19 Aug., 21 Oct. 1924, 12 May 1925.
85 id., 21 Oct. 1924.
86 *Annual Report*, 1925, p.11.
87 Executive minutes, 18 Aug. 1925.
88 *Annual Report*, 1928, pp.11–12.
89 Executive minutes, 16 Feb. 1937.
90 id., 15 Mar. 1938.
91 id., 10 May 1938, 18 July 1939.
92 id., 21 Mar. 1928.
93 Percentage from figures in *Annual Report*, 1938, p.17.
94 Executive minutes, 26 June 1928.
95 id., 19 June 1928.
96 id., 18 June 1929.
97 id., 20 Aug. 1929.
98 *Annual Report*, 1930, p.7.
99 Council minutes, 28 Apr. 1931. Also report from directors association appended to same minutes.
100 *Annual Report*, 1932, pp.16–17.
101 Executive minutes, 19 July 1932.
102 id., 16 July 1935.
103 id., 19 June 1934.
104 *Annual Report*, 1936, p.10.
105 id., 1938, pp.18–19.
106 Executive minutes, 18 Oct. 1938.
107 id., 18 Apr. 1939.
108 Council minutes, 28 Apr. 1931.
109 Council minutes, 24 June 1930.
110 Executive minutes, 15 June 1937.
111 Executive minutes, 19 Nov. 1935, 18 Feb., 17 Mar., 20 Oct. 1936; *Annual Report*, 1936, p.13, 1937, p.19.
112 See also Olive Dodd, The social worker in the kindergarten, in AAPSCD, 1939, pp.138–43 for a masterly survey of the duties of the kindergarten social worker and the possibilities for assistance of families in trouble.
113 Executive minutes, 24 Nov. 1930.

114 *Annual Report*, 1929, pp.16–17.
115 id., 1935, p.17.
116 Executive minutes, 21 Feb. 1939. See also AAPSCD, 1939, p.138—address by Mrs Creswick.
117 Executive minutes, 16 Mar. 1920.
118 *Annual Report*, 1926, pp.6, 17.
119 1927 annual meeting recorded in Council minutes 12 Aug. 1927.
120 Executive minutes, 10 May 1927.
121 id., 28 Feb. 1933, 20 Feb. 1934, 18 Feb. 1936.
122 id., 26 Apr. 1938.
123 *Annual Report*, 1924, p.18.
124 id., 1925, p.19.
125 id., 1926, pp.6, 18.
126 id., 1927, pp.6–8, 18–19. See also FKU, *Forest Hill Residential Kindergarten 1926–1976*, 1976.
127 Council minutes, 26 Oct. 1926, 24 June 1930; Executive minutes, 16 Mar. 1926; *Annual Report*, 1928, pp.6–7.
128 Council minutes, 28 Apr. 1931.
129 *Annual Report*, 1935, p.7.
130 id., 1936, p.28.
131 id., pp.28–9.
132 Council minutes, 28 June 1938; FKU, op.cit., 1976, p.18.
133 Council minutes, 23 Nov. 1937, 11 Feb., 26 Apr. 1938; *Annual Report*, 1938, pp.7, 35.
134 id., 1935, pp.26–7.
135 id., 1937, p.30.
136 id., 1935, p.33.
137 id., 1932, p.31; 1933, p.37.
138 id., 1936, p.32.
139 id., 1937, p.36; 1938, p.46; 1939, p.40.
140 Executive minutes, 19 Sept. 1939.
141 id., 5 Dec. 1939.

Chapter 6

1 Executive minutes, 20 Nov. 1934; 19 Feb., 19 Mar., 14 May, 18 June, 20 Aug. 1935; 18 Feb., 17, 21 Mar., 12 May, 20 Oct., 17 Nov. 1936; Council minutes, 23 June 1936, 6 Oct. 1937; *Annual Report*, 1936, pp.7–9.
2 Walford, op.cit.
3 Executive minutes, 8 Dec. 1936, 21 Sept. 1937, 10 May 1938; *Annual Report*, 1939, p.10.
4 Executive minutes, 19 July, 18 Oct. 1938, 18 June 1940; *Annual Report*, 1940, pp. 7–8, 1941, p.8.
5 Executive minutes, 20 Aug. 1940.
6 id., 7 May 1940. The change from Advisory Council to Council followed Mrs a'Beckett's insistence in 1939 on the need to emphasize the College's educational role.

7 id., 20 July, 9 Dec. 1943; Council minutes, 24 Aug. 1943; Education committee minutes, 12 Nov. 1943.
8 Council minutes, 10 Nov. 1936.
9 Executive minutes, 11 Mar., 18 Oct. 1938; Council minutes, 27 Apr. 1937—principal's report; *Annual Report*, 1938, pp.40–1, 48–9.
10 *Annual Report*, 1937, p.36.
11 id., 1940, p.22; 1941, p.27.
12 id., 1939, pp.36–7; 1940, p.22.
13 Executive minutes, 18 Mar. 1941; Council minutes, 10 June 1941.
14 Executive minutes, 1 Apr. 1941, 19 May 1942; Council minutes, 16 Dec. 1941, 21 Apr. 1942.
15 Executive minutes, 2 June 1941; Council minutes, 16 Sept. 1941.
16 Executive minutes, 16 Aug., 21 Oct. 1941.
17 Education committee to executive, 15 June 1942. Executive minutes, 7 July, 6 Oct. 1942.
18 Executive minutes, 1 Oct. 1942.
19 id., 16 Feb., 2 Mar. 1943; Education committee to executive, 2 Mar. 1943.
20 Executive minutes, 15 Aug. 1944.
21 id., 21 Sept. 1943; 11 Feb., 10 Mar., 22 Sept., 3 Oct. 1944.
22 id., 16 Feb. 1943.
23 id., 17 Oct. 1944.
24 id., 19 Nov. 1946. In 1946, a trained sister, employed at Melbourne's Children's Hospital, received £345 per annum. This had risen from £200 per annum in 1938. Salaries of sub-primary teachers approximated closely to those of directors and assistants when the war ended, but teachers in the state system had a contributory superannuation scheme.
25 id., 18 June 1946.
26 *Annual Report*, 1938, p.21.
27 Executive minutes, 20 Sept. 1938.
28 Copy of agreement, 10 Mar. 1939, signed by Ada Mary a'Beckett, 18 Apr. 1939, in Executive minutes, 19 July 1938–2 June 1941.
29 Executive minutes, 6 Aug. 1940. For information on the Silver Door I am indebted to Mrs D.V. Dare, sister of the late Mrs Rita May Harris, to Lady Paton, and to the late Miss Eva Walker.
30 Executive minutes, 4 Feb. 1941.
31 id., 1 May 1945.
32 Taken from names of new kindergartens in appropriate Annual Reports. The Children's Hospital has been counted as one kindergarten in both lists, though there are three separate entries in the 1939 report and only one (surgical wards) in 1946. Both holiday homes are included in each count.
33 For detailed information on the jig-saw pieces summarized here, see: Presidential address by Mrs T.A. a'Beckett, C.B.E., M.Sc., to the first biennial conference of the AAPSCD, op.cit.; Christine Heinig in the Union's *Annual Report*, 1938, pp. 48–9; *Annual Report*, 1938, pp.5, 9; Executive minutes, 10 Dec. 1929; 19 Aug., 23 Sept. 1930; 21 June 1932; 26 Apr., 20 Sept., 18 Oct., 15 Nov. 1938; 18 July, 21 Nov. 1939; the Commonwealth and education 1901–69 by Eric Bowker, and Ideas, theories and assumptions in Australian education by K.S. Cunningham, In

J. Cleverley and J. Lawry (Eds), *Australian Education in the Twentieth Century*, 1972.

34 Presbyterian Church of Victoria, Report of the Kindergarten Council, In Welfare of Youth Department, *Annual Report*, 1940. Information from the late Miss Laline Cairns-Lloyd.

35 Church of England Free Kindergarten Council, *Jubilee Report*, 1943–68. Information from Miss Win Griffiths, Kew.

36 Robert McPhee, Daniel Mannix: A study of aspects of Catholic educational policy in Victoria 1913–45, 1980.

37 Executive minutes, 15 Aug., 22 Sept., 17 Oct. 1944; Report of conference, in the Health Department, of the Chief Health Officer, the Director of Infant Welfare and Misses A. Dreyer and E. Walker, departmental pre-school officers, with representatives of the AAPSCD, the FKU, and the church kindergarten councils, 26 Nov. 1943. (Files of the Pre-school section of the Division of Field Services, Uniting Church Offices, Little Collins Street, Melbourne.)

38 For example, Executive minutes, 19 July, 20 Sept. 1932.

39 id., 16 July 1940.

40 *Annual Report*, 1941, p.12.

41 Executive minutes, 3, 17 Nov. 1942.

42 Mrs Dougall to Mrs Francis, Secretary of FKU, 8 Oct. 1945. (Loreto Provincialate, South Melbourne, file)

43 Kathleen Kenny to Mrs Dougall, Secretary, Loreto Free Kindergarten Committee, 28 Sept. 1945 (Loreto file). The change in government funding was in fact hinted at by Miss Kenny in her resignation letter when she wrote: 'All kindergartens affiliated with the FKU or controlled by any of the Churches are now under the jurisdiction of the Public Health Department . . . Any centres which fall below requirements are ineligible for the total grant available to those who comply'.

44 *Annual Report*, 1932, p.8, 1949, p.7, 1959, p.5. *Progressive Kindergarten Methods* was published by Lothian Publishing Co Pty Ltd in 1926. For three months (2 June–1 September) in 1942 Lady Armitage was officially president, but she was plagued by ill-health and appears to have attended only one executive meeting before resigning. Again, in June 1945, Mrs Oswald Syme became president, but she too was forced to resign after only five months in office (6 June–20 November).

45 Andrew Spaull, *Australian Education in the Second World War*, 1982, Ch. 7.

46 Executive minutes, 20 Apr. 1943; *Annual Report*, 1943, pp.8, 28; 1944, p.27; 1945, p.31.

47 *Annual Report*, 1945, p.31. Play leaders were not KTC graduates and could not become directors in Union kindergartens; many, however, worked in play centres, or in Union kindergartens as assistants, in a time of acute staff shortage. The course was discontinued after 1955. (*Annual Report*, 1955/56, p.18)

48 Executive minutes, 19 Sept. 1939; 18 June, 2, 16 July, 15 Oct. 1940.

49 Executive minutes, 17 Mar., 7, 21 Apr., 21 July 1942; *Annual Report*, 1943, p.9.

50 Executive minutes, 7 Apr. 1942.

51 id., 4 Mar. 1941.

52 id., 8, 17 Mar. 1942.

53 id., 8 Mar. 1942.

54 id., 17 Mar. 1942.

55 id., 3 Mar., 21 Apr. 1942.

56 id., 6 Oct. 1942.
57 *Annual Report*, 1943, p.10, 1944, p.8; Spaull, op.cit., pp.269–70.
58 Executive minutes, 21 Mar., 20 June 1944; 21 Aug. 1945; 18 Mar. 1947; Education committee minutes, 12 Mar. 1943; *Annual Report*, 1949, p.8.
59 Executive minutes, 18 Mar., 19 Aug. 1947.
60 id., 16 Feb., 15 June 1943; 19 June, 3 July 1945; Education committee minutes, 8 Mar. 1940. KTC students, since 1938, had ceased attending independent schools for sub-primary work, though under Dr McFarland (1939–40) they had attended the Associated Teachers Training Institute for lectures in sub-primary theory, while ATTI students had attended the KTC for pre-school theory (*Annual Report*, 1938/39, p.37). The removal of the sub-primary segment from the KTC course was the result of Miss Heinig's extension of Miss Gutteridge's stress on nursery school work and child development. The age group of concern to KTC students was extended downwards and retracted upwards.
61 Dobson Free Kindergarten, Maidstone, *Annual Report*, 1954.
62 *Annual Report*, 1940, p.8; 1941, pp.10, 13.
63 Executive minutes, 18 Mar., 22 Apr. 1941.
64 id., 17 Mar. 1941.
65 Executive minutes, 21 Apr. 1942—social worker's report.
66 Executive minutes, 17 Sept., 19 Nov. 1940; *Annual Report*, 1941, p.13. The Union had for years been advocating child endowment, initially envisaging it as a state grant (*Annual Report*, 1927/28, p.7)
67 Executive minutes, 18 Aug., 1 Sept. 1942.
68 id., 17 Feb. 1942.
69 id., 17 Nov. 1942.
70 id., 5 Dec. 1944.
71 Victoria, Department of Health, Division of Maternal, Infant and Pre-School Welfare, *Annual Report*, 1945, p.16.
72 *Annual Report*, 1945, p.20. The Union's 1944–45 annual report includes the Lady Gowrie Child Centre and its 95 children in its total figures (p.20). I have excluded them as the Lady Gowrie Centre was associated but not affiliated with the Union. I have counted the two holiday homes in the number of kindergartens, but excluded the numbers of children taken there as they were already included in the total number of children at their own kindergartens.

Chapter 7

1 Victoria, Department of Health, *Annual Report*, 1946, Appendix A, P.33.
2 id., 1956, p.19.
3 *Annual Report*, 1956, p.23.
4 id., 1939, p.36.
5 Files of Pre-School Section, Division of Field Services, Uniting Church Offices, Melbourne. Report of conference in Department of Health, 26 Nov. 1943.
6 *Annual Report*, 1943, p.28.
7 Executive minutes, 12 Feb. 1943—report of education committee; 2 Mar. 1943
8 *Annual Report*, 1944, p.27; 1945, p.34.
9 Executive minutes, 15 Aug. 1944.

10 Dept of Health, *Annual Report*, 1945, p.18.

11 *Annual Report*, 1948, p.21.

12 id., 1945, p.37.

13 id., 1944, p.28; 1945, p.32; 1946, p.32.

14 Executive minutes, 21 Nov., 5 Dec. 1944.

15 id., 19 June 1945; *Annual Report*, 1946, pp.31–2.

16 Executive minutes, 6 Aug. 1946.

17 ibid.

18 Executive minutes, 1 Oct. 1946.

19 *Annual Report*, 1946, p.32; 1947, p.34.

20 Executive minutes, 2 July 1946; *Annual Report*, 1946, p.32.

21 Executive minutes, 18 June 1946.

22 id., 15 July 1947.

23 id., 18 Nov. 1947.

24 Vera Scantlebury-Brown and Evangeline E. Walker, *Pre-School Centres-Play Centres*, issued by Maternal and Child Hygiene Branch, Maternal Infant and Pre-School Welfare Division of the Victorian Department of Health, No. 1, 1945.

25 *Annual Report*, 1948, p.21.

26 Health Commission of Victoria archives (hereafter HCA), File 1024, Pt I—Submission from FKU, 21 Jan. 1948.

27 ibid.—Memorandum from Dr Meredith, 15 Jan. 1948.

28 ibid.—Mrs Creswick speaking at deputation to Minister of Health, 18 Feb. 1948.

29 ibid.—C.R. Merrilees, Chief Health Officer, Maternal and Child Hygiene Branch, to Secretary of Department of Health, 20 Feb. 1948.

30 Executive minutes, 28 Oct. 1947.

31 HCA, File 1024, Pt 1, 24 Apr., 27 Aug., 21 Oct. 1948.

32 ibid., 11 Jan. 1949.

33 *Annual Report*, 1949, p.17.

34 HCA, File 1024, Pt 1, Minister of Health to Secretary of Department of Health, 8 Mar. 1949.

35 ibid.—Deputation to Minister of Health, 18 Feb. 1948.

36 For example, Executive minutes, 17 June 1947, 13 Feb. 1948, 29 July, 28 Nov. 1949, 14 Mar. 1950.

37 id., 16 Nov. 1948, 4 Oct. 1949.

38 *Annual Report*, 1949, p.17.

39 ibid., pp. 5–6.

40 HCA, File 1024, Pt I—Letters from various kindergarten committees, e.g. Box Hill, Black Rock, Stawell, Braybrook, Ballarat, and especially from the Church of England Kindergarten Association and the Kew Pre-School Association.

41 ibid., 7 Oct. 1949. File includes allowances payable to Education Department students from *Victorian Government Gazette*, 29 June 1949. For bursaries see also Executive minutes, 18 Oct. 1949.

42 HCA, File 1024, Pt I, 9 Aug., 27 Sept. 1949.

43 id., 25 May, 13 Oct. 1950.

44 id., 25 May 1950, 30 May 1951.

45 *Annual Report*, 1950, p.15.

46 id., 1949, pp.11, 19; 1950, p.19.

47 id., 1951, p.16.

48 HCA, File 1024, Pt I, Meredith to Chief Health Officer, 20 Sept. 1951.
49 ibid., Rowe to Minister of Health, 2 Oct. 1951.
50 ibid., 7 Nov. 1951.
51 Executive minutes, 20 Feb., 11 July, 21 Aug., 2 Oct. 1951; 19 Feb. 1952.
52 *Annual Report*, 1953, pp.5, 20.
53 *Annual Report*, 1953, p.6.
54 HCA, File 1089/1A, 27 Oct. 1952.
55 ibid., 3 Oct. 1952; 27 Oct. 1952.
56 This was a reference to KTC graduates not being 'registered' to teach anywhere other than in pre-school centres, where they were paid lower salaries than education department teachers in sub-primary and primary grades. This deprivation also led to their being denied 'reciprocity' overseas. See also Executive minutes, 4 July and 15 Aug. 1950, where this matter was exhaustively discussed.
57 HCA, File 1089/1A 3, 24 Nov. 1952.
58 Executive minutes, 5 May 1953—Copy of letter from Secretary, Department of Health, to Mrs Southey, 27 Nov. 1952.
59 id., 2 Dec. 1952.
60 HCA, File 1089/1A 3, G.S. Browne to W.L. Rowe ('Dear Les'), 12 Jan. 1953.
61 ibid.—Rowe to Browne ('Dear George'). The author omitted to note the date of this letter; the Health Commission was later unable to locate the file.
62 Executive minutes, 5 May 1953—Copy of letter from Alan Ramsay to K.S. Cunningham ('Dear Ken'), 30 Apr. 1953.
63 id., 5 May 1953—Confidential report of sub-committee dated 20 April 1953.
64 Council minutes, 9 June 1953.
65 HCA, File 1089/1A 3, Southey to Rowe, 16 June 1953.
66 ibid., 5 Aug. 1953.
67 ibid., Rowe to Minister of Health, 17 Aug. 1953.
68 ibid., Report of Pre-School Child Development Consultative Council, Melbourne, Oct. 1954.
69 ibid., Minister of Health to Minister of Education, 13 Dec. 1955.
70 ibid., FKU to Department of Health, 7 Jan. 1955; Council minutes, 30 Nov. 1955—report of executive.
71 HCA, File 1089/1A 3, Department of Health to FKU, 11 Jan. 1956.
72 *Health Bulletin*, No. 113, Jan.–June 1955, p.18.
73 HCA, File 1089/1A 3, 20, 24 Jan., 24 Feb. 1956.
74 Council minutes, 26 Sept. 1956.
75 Executive minutes, 19 Nov. 1956.
76 Council minutes, 25 Sept. 1957—report of executive.
77 id., 27 Nov. 1957—report of vice-principal of KTC.
78 Executive minutes, 2 Apr. 1957.

Chapter 8

1 *Annual Report*, 1959, p. 32. For names and dates of affiliations and disaffiliations, see lists in appropriate annual reports 1945–59. New country kindergartens were opened at Maryborough (T.L. Stone) and Bairnsdale (1948); Horsham and Red Cliffs (1949); Ballarat North (1950); Colac (Winifred Nance) (1951); Mount Beauty

(1955); Sebastopol and Mildura West (1956). Metropolitan kindergartens were at West Brunswick (Denzil Don), Richmond (Opportunity Clubs), and South-west Brunswick (1952); Northcote (Batman Park), Armadale (Malvern Memorial), and West Heidelberg (Bellfield) (1953); Prahran (Brookville) (1954); Sunshine East (1958); and Dandenong West (1959).

2 Executive minutes, 16 Sept. 1946.

3 *Annual Report*, 1947, p.6; 1948, p.10.

4 id., 1951, p.7.

5 K.S. Cunningham. Ideas, theories and assumptions in Australian education, 1972, p.121.

6 *Annual Report*, 1952, p.12.

7 id., 1954, pp.12–13.

8 id., 1955, p.14.

9 Executive minutes, 20 Aug. 1946; *Annual Report*, 1946, p.7.

10 Executive minutes, 16 Sept., 21 Oct. 1958, 17, 25 Feb., 7 Apr. 1959.

11 id., 25 Feb. 1959; *Annual Report*, 1960, p.13.

12 id., 1956, pp.13, 14; see also Executive minutes, 7 Apr. 1959, for Rita May Harris Kindergarten.

13 *Annual Report*, 1959, pp.6, 16.

14 id., 1956, pp.6–7.

15 Executive minutes, 7 Apr. 1959; Dobson Free Kindergarten, Maidstone, *Annual Report*, 1948, 1952, 1955.

16 *Annual Report*, 1956, p.13, 1958, p.10.

17 Executive minutes, 18 Mar. 1947—supervisor's report; 28 Oct., 18 Nov. 1947; *Annual Report*, 1948, pp.15–16, 1949, pp. 11–12, 1951, p.11, 1952, p.11, 1957, pp.32–3.

18 *Annual Report*, 1948, p.15, 1949, p.12.

19 id., 1953, p.10.

20 id., 1957, p.16.

21 id., 1949, p.11.

22 Executive minutes, 13 July 1951—supervisor's report to education committee.

23 *Annual Report*, 1947, p.18.

24 id., 1949, p.12.

25 id., 1951, p.12.

26 id., 1952, p.11.

27 Council minutes, 28 Oct. 1949; Executive minutes, 26 Sept. 1949; Finance committee recommendations, 21 June 1949.

28 Council minutes, 27 Oct. 1950; Executive minutes, 3 Oct. 1950.

29 HCA, File 1024, Pt I, 20 July 1951.
This argument overlooks the fact that the basic wage was meant to cover the living costs of a man and his wife and three children, whereas a young female teacher at that time was unlikely to have dependants. On the other hand, the teacher was the product of three years expensive, post-secondary training.

30 Executive minutes, 17 July 1951.

31 id., 31 July 1951.

32 *Annual Report*, 1953, especially pp.6–10.

33 See successive Annual Reports, especially 1951, pp.6, 18; 1959, p.12.

34 *Annual Report*, 1955, p.6.

35 Determination of Kindergarten Teachers Board, appended to executive minutes, 18 Feb. 1958.
36 *Annual Report*, 1952, p.10.
37 Financial statements in appropriate Annual Reports.
38 Proceedings of annual meeting, 30 June 1955, in council minutes.
39 Executive minutes, 2 Aug. 1955.
40 Council minutes, 10 Aug. 1955.
41 Executive minutes, 20 Sept. 1955.
42 id., 21 Feb. 1956.
43 id., 6 Mar. 1956.
44 id., 28 Mar. 1956.
45 id., 4 June 1957.
46 Executive minutes, 1 May 1956, for just one example of numerous meetings at which fund-raising schemes were discussed.
47 id., 17 Sept. 1957.
48 id., 18 Nov. 1958.
49 *Annual Report*, 1949, pp.6–7.
50 Executive minutes, 2 Aug. 1949; *Annual Report*, 1955, p.5.
51 *Annual Report*, 1959, p.6.
52 id., 1960, p.3.
53 id., 1946, p.7.
54 id., 1959, pp.5, 10–11.
55 Executive minutes, 19 June 1951; *Annual Report*, 1951, p.6.
56 *Annual Report*, 1948, p.7.
57 Executive minutes, 3 Sept. 1957; *Annual Report*, 1958, p.5.
58 *Annual Report*, 1950, p.13.
59 id., 1956, pp.9–10.
60 id., 1953, p.12.
61 id., 1955, p.11.
62 id., 1947, pp.5, 20.
63 id., 1955, pp.13–14.
64 id., 1956, p.14; see also 1951, p.13, 1957, p.22.
65 id., 1958, p.13.
66 id., 1942, p.21.
67 Minutes of Special General Meeting of the Graduates' Association, 14 Nov. 1949. Documents relating to the Graduates' Association are held in the Graduates' Office, IECD, Clark Street, Abbotsford.
68 *Annual Report*, 1948, p.11; Graduates' Assn, *Annual Report*, 1948.
69 Financial statements in Graduates' Assn Annual Reports, appropriate dates.
70 Graduates Assn, *Annual Report*, 1953, 1954, and others.
71 Minutes of meetings of Graduates Assn, 11 Aug., 29 Sept. 1954.
72 John Bowlby, *Maternal Care and Mental Health*, 1951.
73 Graduates Assn, *Annual Report*, 1954, 1955.
74 id., 1956.
75 id., 1958; *Annual Report*, 1958, p.7.
76 Graduates Assn, *Annual Report*, 1959.
77 Minutes of extraordinary general meeting of Graduates Assn, 2 Mar. 1959. The finance committee meeting referred to was 3 Dec. 1958.

78 Minutes of Council of Graduates Assn, 16 Mar. 1959.

79 id., 15 June 1959.

80 id., 1 July 1959.

81 Minutes of extraordinary general meeting of Graduates Assn, 12 Aug. 1959.

82 id., 15 Sept. 1959.

83 Report of discussion in education committee, 24 Aug. 1960—loose typed sheets in Executive Minute Book, June 1960–Oct. 1963; *Annual Report*, 1960, p.9.

84 Miss Heather Lyon, as principal, sat ex officio on the Council and was therefore unable to resign with the other members. However, she 'withdrew' from membership in January 1960.

85 Graduates Assn, *Annual Report*, 1960, 1961.

86 id., 1961–1965.

87 id., 1966.

88 id., 1961, 1962.

89 id., 1960.

90 The brief, stormy reigns as supervisor of Miss Lett (1912–13) and Miss Emson (seven months in 1914) do not invalidate this point. Their periods in office were brief just because the directors with whom they worked were women expressing their basic philanthropic drive *through* the education of the pre-school child.

Chapter 9

1 *Annual Report*, 1963, p.7.

2 id., 1966, p.13.

3 id., 1963, p.10.

4 Figures from appropriate Annual Reports.

5 Victoria, Department of Health, *Annual Report* (Report of Maternal, Infant and Pre-School Welfare Division) 1959, p.17; 1973, p.22. These figures do not include play centres which also increased rapidly during this period.

6 Executive minutes, 26 Sept. 1967.

7 id., 11 Dec. 1962—report of education committee.

8 id., 11 Dec. 1962. This kindergarten was ultimately affiliated in 1968 when it reduced numbers from 55 to 50. (Executive minutes, 24 Sept., 25 Nov. 1968)

9 id., 10, 24 Oct. 1967.

10 id., 25 June, 10 Sept., 22 Oct. 1968

11 *Annual Report*, 1962, p.6.

12 id., 1970, p.12.

13 Dobson Free Kindergarten, Maidstone, Annual Report, 1960.

14 Executive minutes, 23 Mar. 1965—report of education committee.

15 id., 13 Mar. 1966.

16 id., 12 Sept. 1967.

17 id., 13 Sept. 1966.

18 *Annual Report*, 1969, p.25

19 Council minutes, 4 Aug. 1969.

20 id., 30 Mar. 1971.

21 *Annual Report*, 1965, p.12.

22 Executive minutes, 13 Sept. 1966.

23 *Annual Report*, 1972, p.10.
24 Council minutes, 29 Mar. 1973.
25 Executive minutes, 11 Apr. 1967—report of education committee.
26 All these figures of expenditure and receipts are taken from revenue statements in appropriate Annual Reports.
27 APA (Vic. Branch), *Newsletter*, 21 Sept. 1972, pp.11–13.
28 APA (Vic. Branch), Council minutes, 26 Apr. 1972.
29 *Annual Report*, 1972, p.10.
30 Dobson Free Kindergarten, Maidstone, *Annual Report*, 1966.
31 Executive minutes, 25 June 1963, 10 Nov. 1964.
32 For example, *Annual Report*, 1964, pp.10–13; 1967, p.13.
33 *Annual Report*, 1963, p.11; 1966, p.13; 1970, p.12.
34 Executive minutes, 19 Sept. 1961—report of Director of Pre-School Activities to education committee.
35 *Annual Report*, 1961, p.5; 1962, p.8.
36 Executive minutes, 23 July 1968—report of education committee, 10 Sept. 1968; Council minutes, 30 Nov. 1970.
37 Executive minutes, 12 Oct. 1965.
38 id., 25 Oct. 1966.
39 *Annual Report*, 1967, p.10.
40 Executive minutes, 26 Nov. 1968.
41 *Annual Report*, 1969, p.22.
42 All names and dates from appropriate Annual Reports.
43 Housing Commission of Victoria, *Annual Report*, 1968.
44 For example, Executive minutes, 27 Oct. 1964.
45 *Annual Report*, 1973, p.5.
46 id., 1964, p.8.
47 Housing Commission of Victoria, *Annual Report*, 1953.
48 *Annual Report*, 1970, p.10.
49 Executive minutes, 24 Aug. 1959.
In the 20 years 1959–78, the population in Collingwood, Fitzroy, Port Melbourne, Richmond, and South Melbourne declined by 9000, 9000, 3000, 6000, and 16 000 respectively. In the same period the population in Sunshine increased by 38 000 and in Broadmeadows by 62 000. (Figures from *Victorian Year Book*, 1961, p.103 and 1980, p.179)
50 *Annual Report*, 1964, p.22.
51 Executive minutes, 4 Sept. 1962.
52 id., 8 Dec. 1964.
53 id., 23 Feb. 1965.
54 Helen Paul: notes on future policy presented to executive, 15 Mar. 1965.
55 Council minutes, 31 Mar. 1965.
56 *Annual Report*, 1966, p.8.
57 Executive minutes, 23 Apr. 1968.
58 id., 9 July 1968.
59 id., 27 Aug., 10 Sept. 1968.
60 *Annual Report*, 1966, p.14.
61 Executive minutes, 22 Mar., 26 June 1966, 23 July 1968.
62 id., 28 Feb. 1967.

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63 *Annual Report*, 1965, p.11.
64 Executive minutes, 9 Mar. 1965.
65 *Annual Report*, 1968, p.15; 1969, p.21.
66 Executive minutes, 28 May, 26 Nov. 1968.
67 id., 10 Oct. 1967.
68 id., 21 Sept. 1966, 24 Sept. 1968.
69 *Annual Report*, 1973, p.13.
70 Executive minutes, 27 July 1960—report of social worker to education committee.
71 id., 13 Dec. 1966.
72 *Annual Report*, 1967, p.15. See also Helen Paul's article on the committee problem in *Graduates' Association Newsletter*, No. 10, Oct. 1967, p.3. Graduates Office, IECD, Abbotsford.
73 *Annual Report*, 1968, p.13.
74 Executive minutes, 27 June 1967.
75 id., 23 Mar. 1970.
76 id., 10 Sept. 1968.
77 id., 8 Oct. 1963—report of social worker to education committee, 25 Sept. 1963.
78 Executive minutes, 28 Sept. 1965—report of social worker to education committee.
79 *Annual Report*, 1970, p.14.
80 Executive minutes, 10 May 1966.
81 *Annual Report*, 1969, p.20; 1973, p.13.
82 id., 1961, p.15; 1965, p.19.
83 id., 1958, p.6.
84 Council minutes, 18 Nov. 1959; *Annual Report*, 1960, p.3.
85 *Annual Report*, 1961, p.15.
86 id., p.16.
87 Council minutes, 27 Mar. 1963.
88 *Annual Report*, 1966, p.5.
89 id., 1965, p.11.
90 Executive minutes, 9 Nov. 1965.
91 *Annual Report*, 1962, p.19.
92 id., 1965, pp.13, 26.
93 id., 1966, p.23.
94 id., 1970, p.10.
95 Executive minutes, 10 Dec. 1963; *Annual Report*, 1964, p.11.
96 *Annual Report*, 1970, p.10.
97 Unless otherwise stated, all figures are from revenue statements in appropriate Annual Reports.
98 Executive minutes, 10 Sept. 1963—report of education committee, 24 Mar. 1964.
99 id., 20 Nov. 1962—report of education committee.
100 id., 9 July 1963—report of education committee.
101 id., 25 Aug. 1964.
102 id., 24 Nov. 1964.
103 id., 11 Feb. 1964, 14 Sept. 1965. *Annual Report*, 1964, pp.7–8.
104 *Annual Report*, 1972, p.1.
105 id., 1969, pp.17–18; 1970, p.10.
106 Council minutes, 21 Mar. 1972.
107 id., 30 Mar. 1971; *Annual Report*, 1969, p.12; 1970, p.7; 1971, p.6.

108 Council minutes, 23 Nov. 1971.

109 *Annual Report*, 1972, p.7.

110 According to cynics, this Council was set up to keep the voluntary organizations quiet! According to its terms of reference, it was to examine existing health, educational and welfare services available to pre-school children in Victoria, to seek submissions from organizations and individuals involved in the pre-school field, and to make recommendations as to how services could be expanded, improved, staffed, and financed.

111 This little auxiliary had increased its efforts and its contributions steadily throughout the 1960s, the amount raised yearly growing from £385 (1960/61) to £700 (1964/65) and from £800, expressed as $1600 (1965/66) to $1250 in 1971/72.

112 Council minutes, 10 Aug. 1972.

113 *Annual Report*, 1973, p.7.

Chapter 10

1 APA (Vic. Branch), Minutes, 14 Mar. 1973.

2 The Premier notified Miss Ruby Powell, chairman of the College Council, of this in December 1972, well before the Consultative Council submitted its final recommendations. (Health Commission archives, 21 Dec. 1972, File 555 Pt I.) Living allowances for College students were now to be the same as those given to primary trainees by the Education Department. This achievement had taken a quarter of a century. It is ironical that, only seven years after the increase in the value of the bursaries, the government ceased offering them as there were too many trained pre-school teachers for the existing job vacancies.

3 *Annual Report*, 1974, pp.5–6.

4 id., 1975, p.15.

5 APA (Vic. Branch), Minutes, 22 Aug. 1973.

6 The Victorian Government introduced maintenance subsidy of $2600 p.a. per kindergarten from the beginning of 1977. (Dept of Health to FKU, 10 Dec. 1976—FKU file; *Annual Report*, 1978, p.12.) Subsidy for payment of a teacher relieving when the regular director was ill or on long-service leave was first paid for the year 1975. (Helen Paul to Minister of Health, 27 Oct., 14 Nov. 1975; *Annual Report*, 1976, p.15.)

7 Victoria, Consultative Council on Pre-School Child Development, *Pre-School Child Development in Victoria*, 1973, p.127, Section 12.5.

8 Victoria, Department of Health, *Annual Report* (Report of Division of Maternal, Infant and Pre-School Welfare, 1975).

9 The transformation of the Department of Health into the Health Commission in 1977 left the pre-school division virtually unchanged; it is now a separate part of the Public Health Division, one of the three divisions of the Commission, and its Director is one of the seven Assistant Directors of the Public Health Division. (APA (Vic. Branch), *Newsletter*, Mar. 1979, Vol, 2, No. 1.)

10 *Annual Report*, 1976, p.15.

11 id., 1977, p.17; 1978, p.12.

12 id., 1971, p.2.

13 id., 1973, p.1.

14 id., 1975, p.1.
15 id., 1977, p.2.
16 id., 1978, p.2.
17 id., 1974, p.5.
18 id., 1976, p.5.
19 id., 1980, p.5.
20 id., 1975, pp.8–9.
21 id., 1976, p.9.
22 id., 1980, p.12.
23 id., 1974, p.7.
24 The disaffiliation of the Moonee Ponds Kindergarten at the end of 1979 is an example of municipal activity. The municipality, with a subsidy from the Health Commission, built a new kindergarten to rehouse this kindergarten which had formerly operated in a church hall. They made disaffiliation a condition of building. They now employ the staff and the Health Commission supervises. (*Annual Report*, 1980, p.6.) It is ironical to compare this proprietorial attitude with the lack of interest displayed in pre-school centres by most municipalities before World War II.
25 For financial details in this paragraph, see relevant Annual Reports.
26 *Annual Report*, 1977, p.19.
27 id., 1980, p.15.
28 Kelso to Lieberman, 5 Dec. 1980, Correspondence files at FKU.
29 Confidential figures, available to the Union, support this increase. See also Epidemic of single parents, *The Australian*, 12 Oct. 1981.
30 *Annual Report*, 1976, p.6.
31 id., 1980, p.5.
32 Council minutes, 30 Oct. 1969
33 Executive minutes, 13 Dec. 1971.
34 Victoria, Consultative Council on Pre-School Child Development, op.cit., Preamble to Report, p.7.
35 APA (Vic. Branch), Minutes, 28 Nov. 1973.
36 FKU Staff meeting notes, July 1974, p.1 (File copy at FKU).
37 *Annual Report*, 1975, p.14.
38 ibid.
39 *Annual Report*, 1976, p.13.
40 id., 1977, p.15.
41 A revised version of *Your Kindergarten* had by 1980 appeared in 13 languages.
42 *Annual Report*, 1977, p.17.
43 id., 1978, pp.5, 9, 11.
44 id., 1980, p.7.
45 Victoria, Health Commission, *Report of Pre-School Division of Public Health Division*, July 1978–June 1980, p.3.
46 APA (Vic. Branch), Minutes, 2 Oct. 1974. Copy of Ministerial statement, Establishment of a Children's Commission, 19 Sept. 1974.
47 *Annual Report*, 1977, pp.11–12.
48 id., 1978, p.7.
49 id., 1974, p.7.
50 id., 1980, pp.11–12.

51 id., 1976, pp.13–15.
52 Victorian Department of Health to Moorhead, 21 Oct. 1977—Correspondence files at FKU; *Annual Report*, 1978, p.11; 1979, p.12.
53 Victoria, Health Commission, op.cit., pp.8, 21.
54 ibid., p.2.

Bibliography

The bibliography is arranged according to the location of the material:

A Free Kindergarten Union of Victoria, 383 Church Street, Richmond

1 Minutes of Union Council, manuscript then typescript, complete file from October 1908.

2 Minutes of Union executive, manuscript then typescript, March 1909 to November 1913; October 1917 to the present. Though minutes from November 1913 to October 1917 are missing, reports from executive to council for this period survive in council minutes.

3 Minutes of education committee of the Union, manuscript then typescript, May 1911 to June 1913, July 1937 to the present. No minutes appear to have survived for the period July 1913 to June 1937, but there are regular reports in executive and council minutes.

4 House committee minutes March 1922 to December 1937, November 1946 to November 1953.

5 Finance committee minutes September 1935 to the present.

6 Minutes of meetings of the Directors' Association of the Union June 1912 to August 1916, October 1921 to May 1927, February 1932 to April 1952.

7 Annual Reports of the Union 1910–81. Printed and bound.

8 Annual Reports of individual kindergartens: Collingwood Mission 1907 to 1910, 1920 to 1922, 1925 to 1970; Carlton 1903 to 1950 with occasional gaps; Dobson 1948 to 1967. From 1911 to 1916 brief reports from each affiliated kindergarten were printed in the Union's Annual Reports. The minutes of committee meetings of the Dobson Kindergarten December 1945 to March 1956 and July 1962 to December 1973 are also held at the Union, as are the complete records of the Lady Northcote Kindergarten 1911 to 1969.

9 Files at the Union on all kindergartens currently affiliated. Some of these contain some Annual Reports of individual kindergartens, but there appears to be no complete file of Annual Reports for any one kindergarten. Boroondara (Annual Reports

1914 to the present, minus only 1940 and 1952) appears to have the most complete file.

Union files also contain some correspondence between the Union and particular kindergartens, but these records have only been preserved for the period since 1960.

10 Press cutting book discovered at the Union offices, February 1982 covers period 1912–40 and may well have been inaugurated and kept by Ada Mary a'Beckett. This contains mainly press reports of Union Annual Meetings and fund-raising activities, and of meetings of individual kindergartens. There are many pictures. The slant changes gradually but perceptively from philanthropy to education.

B Health Commission of Victoria, 555 Collins Street, Melbourne

1 Files 555 Pt I, 556 Pt I, 1024 Pt I, 1089/1A, 1593, 1991.

2 *Annual Report* 1940–80. From 1945 onwards, these contain separate reports of the pre-school activities of the Department of Health in the reports of the Division of Maternal, Infant and Pre-School Welfare now the Division of Pre-School Child Development of the Public Health Division of the Health Commission of Victoria.

3 V. Scantlebury-Brown, and E. E. Walker, *Pre-School Centres—Play-Centres*. (Pamphlet No. 1) Melbourne: Vic. Department of Health, 1945.

4 *Principles and Purposes of the Maternal, Infant and Pre-School Welfare Movement in Victoria*. Melbourne: Department of Health, 1957.

C Uniting Church in Australia Offices, 130 Little Collins Street, Melbourne (Pre-school section of the Division of Field Services)

1 Scantlebury-Brown, V. *An Outline of a Pre-school Plan*. Melbourne: Department of Health, 1944.

2 Report of Conference, 26 November 1943, between representatives of the Department of Health and the voluntary pre-school organizations.

D Presbyterian Church of Victoria Offices, 156 Collins Street, Melbourne

1 *Year Book of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria*. Reports on Presbyterian Free Kindergartens from 1947 to 1976 are in the reports of the Welfare of Youth Department.

2 Minutes of State Assembly and Commission, 1918, 1943, 1946.

E Victorian Public Record Office, Laverton Repository, 57 Cherry Lane, Laverton

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F Loreto Provincialate, 73 St Vincent Place South, Albert Park

File on the Loreto Free Kindergarten including a brief summary of that kindergarten's history by the late Sister Mildred from its opening and affiliation with the Union in 1912 to its closure in 1969, and letters between the Kindergarten and Union at the time of disaffiliation 1945.

G State Library of Victoria

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H Graduates' Office, Institute of Early Childhood Development, Abbotsford annexe.

Files here include Graduates' Association *Annual Reports*, minutes of meetings of the Graduates' Association and of the Graduate Council, and Graduates' Association *Newsletters*.

I Australian Pre-School Association (Victorian Branch)

1 Minutes of APA (Vic. Branch)
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3 Assorted historical material, including the now rare *A Guide to Charity*, 1912, by Mrs Ellie Pullen, M.B.E., a former president of the Municipal Pre-School Association.

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